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CHANGES in the  
THEORY---TACTICS  
of the (GERMAN)  
SOCIAL DEMOCRACY

PAUL HAMPTON EVER

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... CHANGES ...  
IN THE  
**THEORY AND TACTICS**  
OF THE  
**(German) Social-Democracy**

BY  
**PAUL KAMPFFMEYER**

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*Translated by Winfield R. Gaylord*

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1908

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## **TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.**

It was the good fortune of the writer to make his entrance into the Socialist movement by way of the Wisconsin organization. After a number of years of active organizing work, mainly in that state, the question forced itself upon his mind, "Why is Wisconsin so far ahead of the rest of the American Socialist movement?" In the solution of the problem thus presented, it became increasingly clear that the leaders, at least, of the Wisconsin movement were building upon the results of the best thinking of the whole international movement. A search for the source of the ideas which dominate the Wisconsin movement led first of all to the German Social-Democracy and its wealth of literature. This brochure of Kampffmeyer's was recommended by Mr. Victor L. Berger as the most concise summary of these various ideas. Finding it to be a veritable mine of information, not being able to discover a translation of it in the English, and having the consent of Herr Kampffmeyer himself, the writer undertook the task of translating the booklet and thus making it available for English-speaking readers. The bulk of

the work has been done on railway trains, street cars, and away from the conveniences of the library. But it has been my good fortune to have the sympathetic and intelligent aid of a former member of the Lassallean movement in Cologne, Mr. Karl Kleist, in the final revision. Valuable aid on the part of Mr. Victor L. Berger is also to be acknowledged.

Its value, not only to Socialists but to all impartial students of the Socialist movement, seems to justify its offer to the public.

WINFIELD R. GAYLORD.

*Milwaukee, Wis., April, 1908.*

## AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

This modest little work on the Changes in the Theory and Tactics of the Social-Democracy is hardly intended for a hot-blooded controversial effort. It is intended to say to the reader simply, these are the problems over which there have arisen such passionate struggles in the ✓ Social-Democracy ; and here also are the characteristic solutions which have been found for the problems. It is not the intention of this work to criticise, and least of all is it intended to be censorious. The reader is introduced into the splendid battle of ideas within the Social-Democracy, and he is aided in his effort to form his own opinion concerning the battle. The attempt is mainly to estimate the fundamental ideas in the theory of the leading minds of the Social-Democracy. A really fruitful discussion of these ideas presupposes necessarily a presentation of the ideas themselves which shall be as objective as possible. That is just the kind of presentation which is aimed at in this pamphlet.

A thorough-going discussion of the position of the Social-Democracy as to its agricultural and commercial policy has been purposely avoided ✓

by the author. To begin with, after two very promising efforts at a settlement of the agricultural question, the party as a whole has laid the question aside for the time being. In spite of the profound works of Kautsky and David, the points of view of the party as a whole are not yet sufficiently clear in connection with the agricultural problems. A closer approach to the question of free trade or protective tariff remains which shall first and foremost discuss Social-Democratic questions of principle: but free trade or protection has never hitherto been a question of principle for the Social-Democracy. Marx alone, in his well-known speech at Brussels on this subject (1847) saw in free trade an effective lever of the social revolution. The Social-Democratic convention at Gotha (1876) regarded the free trade and protective tariff issue as a practical question to be decided from time to time.

PAUL KAMPFFMEYER.

*Tegel near Berlin, February, 1904.*

## INTRODUCTION.

### THE UNFOLDING OF SOCIALISM IN THE SOCIAL-DEMOCRATIC THEORY.

Conscious of its great mission for the future, but always with warm heart, and cool, clear head, the German Social-Democracy has been compelled to discuss the great question of the transition from the capitalistic world of wage-slavery, to the world of free labor in comradeship. As a result, this party comes into the possession of an almost inexhaustible literature of scientific works, pamphlets, etc., on this question—a noble literature in large measure, springing from the pens of men who look out upon whole epochs of the world-drama from the mountain tops of science. We will name here, only Marx, Engels and Lassalle.

Let us estimate first of all the man who, at the time when the German labor movement was just awakening, in the sixties of the last century, first furnished weapons for the Social-Democracy: the great-spirited agitator, *Ferdinand Lassalle*.

It was to the rumbling accompaniment of weapons clashing in the struggle between the ranks and the classes, according to Lassalle, that the ancient, the medieval and the modern business organizations of society succeeded each other. In all these phases of the social evolu-

*very heroic view*

tionary process, the state has always been a state of the ruling, exploiting classes: a slave holders' state in the classic times, a land owners' state in the Middle Ages, and a capital owners' state in the modern civic society.

But the instrument of rule of the hitherto exploiting classes seemed suddenly in the nineteenth century about to be shattered. Those who had been until now the exploited and the oppressed climbed into the lap of time, and demanded stormily their rights in the wonderful kingdom of culture which their own rough, labor-calloused hands had mainly fashioned. In the year 1848 the insolent and arrogant exploiting class was confronted with a question that was new in the history of the world: The Labor Question. The fiery breath of the oncoming proletarian class was blown in the faces of the bourgeoisie from the barricade battle of the Paris revolution of February. And to authenticate, as it were, to the outside world the dawn of a new age in the world's history, the Revolution of 1848 called a working man (by the name of Marie) to the provisional government. They proclaimed the universal suffrage, and according to Lassalle, declared the purpose of the state to be the betterment of the lot of the working class.

Ferdinand Lassalle grasped clearly the exploiting character of the modern capitalistic economy, and with revolutionary passion he cried out to the workers: "Save! save yourselves out of a social condition which has reduced your humanity to a commodity!"

The great power which is to rescue them from the hardships and anxieties of capitalistic slavery is, according to Lassalle, the state built upon the universal suffrage. ✓

It is the historical mission of this state to accomplish the release of the working class from its economic and political bonds. In the theories of Lassalle, the state enjoys a certain creative power. It can and will achieve the evolution and the training of man into freedom. The democratic state, taking hold with socialistic purpose, will transform the business world, which is now split into warring camps by abysmal contradictions. Even considering the social-political plan presented for the solution by Lassalle (viz: the establishment of productive societies with state aid), as an *emergency measure*, the Lassallean basic thought is revealed. It is this: that the democratic state, with far-seeing spirit and mighty hand, is able systematically to transform capitalism into socialism, and save society from the assault of the violent revolution, which comes threateningly upon brazen sandals.

In the social-political program of Lassalle the state assumes a place of dominating power among the economic and social powers of the time. A portion of orginal creative power rests in the state. ✓

According to *Karl Marx*, on the contrary, the state lives entirely as it were from borrowed power, prolonging its existence only by loans from the ruling economic and social powers of the time. According to Marx, the state, within the sphere of the economic life, is surrounded by ✓

transforming forces. The capitalistic state is a creation of the capitalistic economy, acting upon no will of its own. Marx cannot find enough scorn and ridicule for the Lassallean theory of the state. In the old Social-Democratic Gotha program, he points out everywhere the pestilential smell of the superstitious belief in the state on the part of the Lassallean sect. To quote him: "Why, the whole program is infected through and through with the superstitious 'belief in the state' of the Lassallean sect, or else what is no better, with the democratic superstition; or rather, it is a compromise between these two kinds of superstition, both equally foreign to socialism."

The creative economic powers wrench apart the capitalistic order of economy and the state organization, according to Marx.

The gigantic steam-driven factory machines raise the productive powers into the immeasurable, while the unlimited wares which the working forces throw off cannot be consumed by society.

Socialism does not come into being by a conscious seizing of the powers of the state by a preconceived plan, but through the wrenching of the old order through the powers of production—the creative powers which are in the service of production.

In the process of assembling combined capital, the material factor—the machines—increases entirely out of proportion to the personal factor—the workers. While the one element of capital—the living labor—increases in the productive

process in the ratio of 1:2:3:4, the other means of production—the machine—grows in the proportion of 1:2:4:6. The part played by the living labor in capitalistic production is ever narrower and narrower.

An army of unemployed laborers rises out of the soil of the capitalistic order of production: the industrial reserve army appears. With the increase of the power-driven factory machines, the superfluous working population increases in correspondingly frightful dimensions. In addition to this the number of "hands" seeking employment swells constantly. There throng about the factory door whole troops of women and children, whose weaker powers find a preferred employment at the factory machines. On the one side the demand for the workers engaged in production narrows, while on the other side the supply of workers grows to gigantic proportions on account of the flood of women and children. The living labor, this fountain head of the capitalistic surplus, dries up more and more in the process of capitalistic production. Capital chokes up, as it were, the source of its own riches. It throws out of the productive process the value of the creating laborer. Hence it endeavors to exploit the living labor, the busy worker, still more strongly. In the same measure in which capital is piled up, the lot of the workers is degraded. All means of developing production turn into means of exploiting and tyrannizing over the worker, degrade him to an attachment of the machine, transform his living-time into labor-time, and subject him in the

process of labor to the most petty and hateful despotism. "Finally, the law, which holds the surplus population or industrial reserve army always in equilibrium with the extent and energy of accumulation, binds the worker to capital more securely than the chains of Hephaestos held Prometheus to the rock. It involves an accumulation of misery corresponding to the accumulation of capital. The accumulation of capital at the one pole is also at the same time accumulation of suffering, torment of labor, slavery, ignorance, brutalization and moral degradation at the opposite pole, i. e., on the side of that class which yields its own product as capital." (Marx.)

The powers of production spew out prodigious piles of commodities on the one hand, and measureless misery on the other hand. The perfected technical means of production create at once surplus product and surplus people. The superfluous and overworked people set themselves in defense against an economic order which suffocates with their own wealth, since they can only turn it over to a few groups of capital-magnates. The contradiction between the powers of production which ever advance with giant strides, and the narrow capitalistic conditions of production and conditions of property, drives and strives toward a social catastrophe.

"With the ever decreasing number of capital-magnates, who usurp and monopolize all the benefit of this process of change, grows the mass of the misery, the servitude, the degeneracy, the

exploitation—but also the mutiny—of the ever-growing working class, educated and organized by the very mechanism of the capitalistic process of production itself. The monopoly of capital becomes the fetter of the productive method, which has flourished with it and under it. The centralization of the means of production and the socialization of labor reach a point where they become incompatible within the capitalistic shell. It is wrenched apart. The hour of capitalistic private property has struck. The expropriators are expropriated."

The great industries based upon associated labor are now constructed, but they operate only for a one-sided enrichment of the magnates of capital, and not in the interests of the socially organized working class. This trained and organized society of workers shatters the capitalistic form of production, which was for them an unfailing source of misery and servitude.

Marx proved repeatedly the aggravated tyrannical character of the capitalistic social order and of the state, in his smaller economic-historical writings. "In the measure," he goes on in his work on "The Civil War in France," "in which modern industrial progress develops, widens and deepens the class struggle between labor and capital, in the same measure the power of the state takes on more and more the character of a public force for the oppression of the working class, of a machine for class rule."

Marx always looked upon the forcible shattering of the capitalistic economic and state

forms by the proletariat as an historical necessity. In his critique of the Social-Democratic Party Program of 1875, Marx touches upon the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat. "Between the capitalistic society and the communistic lies the period of the revolutionary transformation of the one into the other. This corresponds to a political transition-period, in which the state cannot be anything else but the dictatorship of the proletariat. Now the 1875 program has neither anything to do with the latter, nor with the future state of the communistic society. Its political demands contain nothing outside of the old democratic litany, known to all the world—universal franchise, direct legislation, popular rights, protection of the people, etc. It is simply an echo of the old People's Party, The Peace and Liberty Alliance."

*Engels* has presented this theory of Marx, concerning the collapse of capitalism by the contradictions inherent in it, in his little work on "Socialism, Utopian and Scientific." "In this way or in that," he says, "with or without trusts, the official representative of capitalist society, the state, must finally take over the management of production. The necessity of this change in state property appeared first in the great means of commerce: the postal service, the telegraph, and railroads." According to Engels, the state extends its domain in increasing measure. In his well-known controversial treatise on "Herr Duehring's Revolution of Science," Engels says: "Whatever its form, the modern state is an essentially capitalistic machine, a state of the capital-

ists, the ideal collective capitalist. The more of the forces of production it takes possession of, the more it becomes actually the collective capitalist, and it exploits so many the more citizens. The workers remain wage-workers, proletarians. The condition of capitalism is not abolished, it is only driven much more to the extremity. But at the extremity it falls. Possession by the state is not the solution of the conflict, but it conceals within itself the formal means, the lever, of the solution. \* \* \* In that the capitalistic mode of production transforms the greater part of the population more and more into proletarians, it creates that power which is compelled to accomplish this revolution under penalty of destruction. In that it tends to transform the great socialized means of production into state property, it shows the way itself to the accomplishment of this revolution."

The state, having absorbed within itself the power of production, will be put out of joint by the oppressed proletariat. Engels in his "Housing Problem" holds completely just the idea that the proletariat will be scourged into the arms of the revolution by a system of exploitation which has been forced to the last extremity.

According to Engels, in Germany the farmers engaged in domestic industries, numbering millions, are led directly into this movement towards destruction, alongside of the workers in the great industries. He says in his "Housing Problem": "The domestic industry has become the broad basis of the German export trade, and

so also of the whole extent of the great industries. With this it has spread from Germany along broad lines, and extends farther every day. The ruin of the small farmer became inevitable from the time when his domestic manufacture for home use was annihilated by the cheap, ready-made and machine product, and his stock of cattle as well as his fertilizer product was annihilated by the destruction of the "mark" constitution, the communal mark, and of the Flurzwang (common law of the fields). This ruin irresistibly drives the small farmers—already at the mercy of the usurers—into the modern domestic manufacture. But with the extension of domestic manufacture, one farm district after another is thrust into the contemporary industrial movement. The revolutionizing of the country districts by domestic industry distributes the industrial revolution and the labor movement over a far greater territory than in England or in France. This movement is not confined to the industrial centers of Germany. A successful revolt in the capital would be possible in Germany only when the small cities and country districts were ripe for the revolution. It can never by any normal development happen to us that there can be such a labor war as was fought in Paris in 1848 and 1871; but neither, for the same reason, shall we ever suffer defeat in the principal city of the revolution at the hands of the reactionary provinces, as happened in both cases in Paris. The rural domestic industry and manufacture, which in their extension have become the

dominating branch of German manufacture, revolutionize the peasantry."

"But at a certain stage of the development of this rural domestic industry and manufacture, there comes the hour of its destruction—through the machinery and the factory process. However, the annihilation of the rural domestic industry and manufacture in Germany spells also the expropriation of almost half of the small farmers of Germany, the transformation not only of the domestic industry into the factory process, but also of peasant farming into capitalistic agriculture on a large scale."

"Should it be the lot of Germany to carry through this transformation also under the old social conditions, she will undoubtedly furnish the turning point. Should the working class of no other land have taken the initiative by that time, Germany will doubtless strike the first blow, and the peasant sons of the 'glorious army' will help along bravely." (Engels.)

Eighteen years later Friedrich Engels, the patriarch of the Social-Democracy, drew in short, bold strokes, a different picture of the future development of Germany, and that in his well-known introduction to Marx's "Class Struggles in France." Filled with the proud confidence of victory, he recalls the astounding election results of the German Social-Democracy.

According to Engels the earlier experiences with the universal franchise, in the Latin countries and in Switzerland, were not exactly encouraging for a labor party. On that account

the revolutionary laborers of the Latin countries regarded the franchise as an instrument of the governmental cheat. On the other hand the German workers have transformed the franchise from a means of cheating into an implement of deliverance. Even if it is only a measure for ascertaining the conditions of strength of the proletariat, and has been granted by the opposing parties, the franchise is already of inestimable value. But it is more than that. It is a Socialist means of propaganda of penetrating power. A new plan of battle for the proletariat came into effective operation with the successful use of the universal franchise. "It was found that the form of the state in which the rule of the bourgeoisie had organized itself, afforded still another handle by means of which the working class could grasp this same governmental form. They took part in elections for the assemblies, town councils, and industrial courts. And so it came to pass, that the bourgeoisie came to fear the legal action of the working class party much more than their illegal action, and were more concerned about the results of an election than those of a rebellion."

The conditions of the struggle have essentially changed. The rebellion of the old style, the street battle with barricades, is outgrown. Great changes in military tactics have resulted. The narrow, crooked streets are displaced by broad and straight thoroughfares, which are "as though made to order for the working of the new cannon and rifles. That revolutionary must be crazy who would himself seek a barricade battle

in the working class district of north and east Berlin."

The conditions of the people's war have changed—no less those of the class struggle. The day of the sudden assault is past. There came, even in the Latin countries, a time for the revision of the old tactics. The German example of the use of the franchise, the capture of every outpost, was followed everywhere. In all countries except Russia (1895) the taking part in elections goes merrily forward. Obviously, our comrades of other countries do not renounce their right of revolution. The right of revolution is most of all the only real historical right. But whatever may happen in other countries, the German Social-Democracy has a peculiar situation, and therewith also a different problem. We can already count (in 1895) on two and one-fourth million votes.

"Should this continue, we shall gain by the end of this century the greater part of the middle classes of society, small business men as well as farmers, and shall have grown to be the dominating power of the land, before which all other powers must bow, whether they are willing or not. To maintain this growth unbroken, until of itself it rises above the head of the ruling system of government, that is our principal task."

Nothing but a conflict with the military on a great scale, according to Engels, could retard the growth of the socialistic fighting powers for a time, and then only for a time, not perma-

nently: for a party consisting of millions may not be wiped off the earth. Through use of the legal methods the Social-Democracy grows stately and gains thereby stout muscles and red cheeks. On the other hand the clamor rises for violation of law and destruction, domineering laws of revolution are proposed, the violation of the constitution, dictatorship, and the return of absolutism. It must not be forgotten, however, that the German commonwealth is the product of a compact, a compact among the princes, and between the princes and the people. If one side should break their bond, the whole compact would be broken and the other side would be no longer bound.

Sixteen hundred years ago there arose a dangerous revolutionary party in the Roman commonwealth, undermining religion, and spreading to the uttermost frontiers of the Roman world. It was the Christian party. This revolutionary party was strongly represented in the army. Diocletian sought, by a law concerning the Christians, to crush this party. The churches were torn down, the religious gatherings forbidden, the Christians were divested of all political rights, divested of all state positions and denied any rights before the law. The Christians tore this exceptional law down from the walls. On that account the Caesar carried on a bloody persecution of the Christians. That was the last of its kind. "And it was so effective, that seventeen years later the army consisted overwhelmingly of Christians, and the succeeding autocrat of the Roman dominions, Constantine, named by

the priests the Great, proclaimed Christianity as the state religion."

The point of view, that the productive powers tend to force capitalistic society into dissolution, is very successfully defended by *Rosa Luxemburg*. Compared with the impelling economic powers, the potencies of the state lead a purely shadowy existence. The democracy cannot accomplish the work of social deliverance within the capitalistic social order. In this social order it is precisely the dominant economic and social class—the capitalist class—which rules, and there with victorious strength gives expression to its own interests. That which is in its form a democratic institution becomes in its content a tool of the ruling class interests. This appears today in palpable form in the fact that so soon as the democracy has a tendency to deny its class character and turn into a tool of the actual interests of the people, the forms of democracy are sacrificed even by the bourgeoisie and their official representatives. In view of this, the idea of a Social-Democratic parliamentary majority exists as a calculation dealing only with the one, formal side of democracy, but which leaves entirely out of account the other side—the real content. And the democracy as a whole appears, not as a distinct element which gradually penetrates capitalist society, as Bernstein assumes, but rather on the contrary as a specifically capitalistic instrument, to bring the capitalistic contradictions to maturity and perfection."

"In the accepted understanding of the party, the proletariat is led through the economic and

political battle to the conviction of the impossibility of a final bettering of its condition by this battle, and of the inevitability of an ultimate taking possession of the instruments of political power."

A gradual socializing process in the capitalistic society is imaginary. The capitalistic property and state institutions develop themselves in an opposite direction. The political and economic battles have only to socialize the consciousness of the working class. If one conceives them to be the means for the direct socialization of the capitalistic economy, they not only deny their former falsely imputed efficacy, but at once forfeit their only other possible meaning: they cease to be a means of educating the working class to a proletarian revolt. The current Social-Democratic tactics do not consist in awaiting the development of the capitalistic contradictions to the farthest point—and there only to await its overthrow. "On the contrary, we depend entirely upon the direction of the development once given, but then in the political battle force its consequences to the issue, anticipating—discounting, as it were—the further objective development, and standing always upon the basis of the contradictions developed to full maturity, in which undoubtedly the essence of every revolutionary policy consists."

*K. Kautsky* follows Marx pretty closely in his ideas concerning the culmination of the capitalistic character of the modern state. As he shows, in a controversy with the author of this

present writing in "Vorwaerts" of May and June, 1901, the economic contradictions become ever more acute during the revolutionary process. The social control of social production and consumption comes into being first with the victory of the proletariat over the bourgeoisie. Every extension of the capitalist economy only increases the contradictions inherent in the whole capitalist system.

The course of the present economic method is that of a constant increase of the reserve army of labor. In all newly opened territories, in Italy, Russia, India, China, there arises a reserve army, which finally seeks its outlet in the older capitalistic territories. In the reserve army there springs forth a fountain of inexhaustible human misery. It cannot possibly be checked by the social system of today. Ever more powerful indeed rises the might of the proletariat. One who studied it alone, might feel himself tempted to believe that it needs only to develop itself in the direction established to grow gradually into a position where it would make its peace with the state and with society.

But no less mighty and threatening than the proletariat, the great money power raises its head; ever more it develops its organization; ever more recklessly it presses the power of the state into its service; ever more powerfully and socially-hurtful becomes the money power; ever more the opposition between capital and labor becomes the prevailing content of the inner politics of modern states, and ever more important in the outcome of the battle for both classes is

the attitude of the power of the state. We must expect hard battles, which will grow ever greater in extent, and which finally must culminate in one battle for the combined power of the state —a battle which can only come to an end when the proletariat has conquered the power of the state, and with its aid has deprived the money power of the means of its economic might.

Only through the conquest of the power of the state, according to Kautsky, can the working class gain the conditions essential to a fruitful social transformation. "In what territory do the greatest conflicts face us?" asked Kautsky in the Dresden party convention (1093). "In the territory of the state power. That is the organization by which the ruling classes hold down the propertyless classes. The trades unions are surely necessary, but once they come to the point where they become dangerous to the bourgeoisie, you may be certain that great damage will be done by the help of the state. Think only of England.

"Then of municipal socialism! Of course we can go somewhat farther in the cities, but only within narrow limits, while every forward step will be hindered by the power of the state. And it is exactly the same with the right to vote. When the ruling classes are in danger, and are really threatened in their possession of the state power, then the laws will be changed so that all further progress will be checked.

"The possession of the state power is decisive. Only in possession of this power we have the sure foundation on which to realize socialism.

On this account the possessing classes hold on to the power of the state.

"Kolb says, 'We must compel the bourgeoisie to divide the state power with us.' But I can only compel him over whom I am master! When we have the power to compel the bourgeoisie, we shall not have to divide with them." And Kautsky then develops briefly the tactics of the party, in its battles with its opponents and with the state power.

Our tactics hitherto have been shaped, so that we always pressed recklessly forward, and by this means we spread the opposition to the ruling classes ever farther, embittered the ruling classes increasingly against us, so that with every increase of power we infused more fear into the possessing class, so that the conflicts constantly sharpened, to the end that we finally should come face to face with conditions where a great decision would be forced, in which we would then be compelled to overthrow our opponents and take their power away.

All the theories of the progressive development of the state presented here agree in one point: the capitalistic state not only retains its class character, but sharpens it increasingly, and therefore an effective socialization of the present day economic, social and governmental system is utopian.

One group of Social-Democratic theoreticians and leaders incline to the point of view that a gradual change in the essence of the capitalistic economy is possible through the growing condi-

tions of the economic and political power of the working class.

✓ *Von Vollmar* developed this point of view first and most successfully in June and July, 1891, at Munich.

"Just as the natural conditions," he says in his address, "Concerning the Immediate Tasks of the German Social-Democracy," "develop themselves in transformations following each other and not in a jerky, sudden, or disconnected way, so the (successive) social orders do not release one another as disconnected unities complete in themselves. There is here also just as little of artificial making as of sudden breaking off and beginning again. But rather the old grows gradually—all too slowly for the high-soaring mind—but surely, into the new. These thousand-fold roots of today in yesterday, and of tomorrow in today, permit nothing to happen that is absolute; all political and social conditions are somewhat relative, are transition forms. To use the form of today so as to bring influence to bear upon the shaping of tomorrow—that must be our task. The Social-Democracy must be developed to an ever more forceful factor of power."

In Berlin, according to *Vollmar*, the assertion is made that the laws for the protection of the workers only hindered the emancipation of the people. "'He who busies himself with small, momentary betterments, is lost for the revolution. Our eyes must only see the misery in the present order, only its incapacity for betterment. \* \* \*' Such an opinion will doubtless be

regarded by its representatives as especially loyal to principle, but it is at bottom nothing but the policy of sterility and despair. Its foundation is the anarchist motto: 'The worse off the people are, the better.' But every one of us knows that when a person has sunk below a certain standard of living, he has indeed the power to take part in a street riot, in a revolt, to break in windows or even to crack skulls; but for an enduring, earnest and goal-conscious effort he is no longer available. Therefore we have always insisted upon a striving for a gradual, progressive improvement in the lot of the worker. \* \* \* The life of society and of the state does not consist of tumbling leaps, but of a series of shifting changes of the conditions of power, of partial successes. And our party is just as much subject to this law as any other." This idea was worked out further by Von Vollmar in his work, "State Socialism."

The conquest of the political power "does not happen at one stroke, any more than the economic revolution—the foundation and principal cause of our inevitable progress—occurred at one stroke. Every success of our party, every increase in the number of our followers and voters, every enlargement of our representation in the Reichstag and in other representative bodies *acquires for us a new portion of the political power.* And with every additional portion we will win a greater influence upon the management of the state enterprises, through which we can not only affect directly the condition of the state employes, but can also gain an

ever more thorough-going influence upon the whole productive process and can use this to promote the development in our sense."

The well-known book of *Bernstein*, "The Pre-suppositions of Socialism and the Tasks of the Social-Democracy," is based upon the fundamental idea that a gradual democratizing and socializing of the capitalist economic system can be brought about by means of the cautious reform activity of the working class. The principal significance of this book, in our judgment, consists in the proof that it is not necessary for the capitalistic contradictions to become acute through the impoverishment of the masses, to such a degree that a violent explosion of the capitalist form of production becomes an unavoidable necessity. With this proof Bernstein united a thorough-going inquiry into the possibility of the Social-Democracy carrying out its principles through a gradual socializing and democratizing of the capitalist society. The co-operative and trades-union movement appeared, from Bernstein's point of view, as necessary pre-suppositions of Socialism. Bernstein valued legislation for the protection of the workers as a systematic encroachment of society upon the capitalist system of production, and gave great significance to the principle of this legislation. The remodeling of the functions of the community through municipal socialism he regarded as an essential step towards socialism. Democracy appears in Bernstein's book as a necessary political form in which the social development from capitalism to socialism must move.

We are not writing a connected history of the Social-Democratic theory. We have only indicated the basic ideas of Marx and his followers concerning the coming into existence of socialism, and with a similar indication of their theories we must close with the so-called "revisionists."

We ask, "What ideas always recur, in the case of Woltman, David, Elm, etc., in the establishing of their revisionistic theories?"

In the history of the social evolution hitherto, the political power of a social class has always followed close upon the steps of its economic power. Because the citizen class had achieved enormous economic power in the unfolding traffic and trade, in manufacture and industry, it was able to conquer the political power. Politics is closely dependent upon economics. The political power of a class is not a thing complete, in itself, but rather is determined, as to its fundamental lines, by the economic and social power of this very class. The conquest of the political power by the working class is conditioned by the growing influence of the working class upon social production and consumption. How can the workers obtain this influence? The trades unions, for instance, fight for a share in the regulation of the workshop, of the factory; and they are transforming the capitalistic factory into a constitutional factory. The workers seek, further, to organize a portion of the social consumption, and upon the basis of organized consumption they organize the co-operative producing societies. A portion of economic power

passes over into the hands of the workers in the form of the great co-operative producing and consuming societies. The economic power of the working class grows further with the influence of this class upon municipal affairs and with the extension of municipal property. The workers extend the socially useful functions of the state, and seek to rule these. As a future economic power the working class puts itself in possession of the political power, and socializes step by step the capitalistic economic order. The capitalistic private property passes through frequent metamorphoses. It goes over into municipal and state property, and the aspiring workers gradually put together the municipal and state affairs and socialize the capitalistic economy and the capitalistic state. Only a working class strengthened politically and economically has any prospect of conquering the political power. A class which, over against capitalism, becomes increasingly more impotent and is only driven to a decisive struggle by its desperate economic conditions, has no such prospect.

In closing, we will let one more independent Social-Democratic thinker have a word, one to whom the radical as well as the opportunistic Social-Democrats have often laid claim: Wilhelm Liebknecht.

In *Wilhelm Liebknecht's* mind there jostled each other the ideas of a forcible revolutionary collapse of capitalism, and of a growing of capitalism into socialism. From his lips sprang the words: "No peace with the present state,"

and also, "Socialism cannot develop itself within this state, it must overturn the latter, so that it itself may come into existence." He is at the same time, however, author of the expression: "Who can sharply distinguish the present from the future state? *The present state grows into the future state*, just as the future state is already embryonic in the state of today. The case does not happen according to a Socialist law, so that at a stroke of midnight the old state ceases and the new begins. We must not allow ourselves to be made responsible for this childish idea, which our opponents adopt, in that they fear that we want to make a *tabula rasa*—as though that were possible!—and we do that, when we try to draw a definite line between the present state and the so-called future state." In another place he says: "Do we not place all our programs within the present state? And where does the present state begin? Where does it cease? Is a line of separation to be drawn between the present state and the 'future state,' so-called—to use the much misused word? Do they not both merge into each other?"

Vollmar has already referred, in his little work on "State Socialism," to the fact that Liebknecht, in his speeches and pamphlets, considered carefully whether the transition from the old into the new world could not be accomplished through a series of reforms, with the greatest possible consideration for the interests of the present ruling classes. If, following a proper point of view, the state should emancipate itself from its class-character, that is, become a true state

of the people, then the change of form could be accomplished gradually and without any violent damage to private interests.

Finally, Liebknecht has left the party a fragment in which, according to Kolb, he says: "Either a crash will follow, through some war in which the whole bankruptcy of the ruling society will be revealed as by elemental force, when we would probably gain the whole political power; or else the ruling society, perceiving that they are finding themselves upon a very dangerous way, will give in, and then one of our class will be called to the administration, and entrusted especially with the adjustment of the conditions of labor."

The second part of the Erfurt Program of the Social-Democratic party opens further the outlook upon a gradual democratizing and socializing of the capitalistic social order.

We propose in our program first of all: the universal suffrage for all parliamentary and municipal bodies, direct legislation, arming of the people, free right to combine, gratuitous school instruction, administration of justice, medical and burial aid, graduated property-income-and inheritance tax, national and international legislation for the protection of workers, with the eight-hour day, adjustment of industrial conditions through a Chamber of Labor, and a taking over and democratizing by the state of industrial insurance. The realizing of these partial, but very thorough-going political and social demands presupposes, however, a growing influence of the workers upon the state.

We have sketched herewith in a few strokes the ideas which the leading minds of the Social-Democracy have formed concerning the development of capitalism into socialism. According to these ideas they have outlined their tactics, their social practice. They say, for instance: "We can never mould and transform the state in our own spirit under the rule of capitalism; accordingly we only announce our great goal out of the windows of the political structures."

We now have to sketch in the following chapters the influence of the Social-Democratic ideas concerning the development of Socialism, upon the estimate of the practical activity of the working class. We arrange this investigation under the following chapters:

- I. The Capitalistic State and the Parliamentary Activity of the Social-Democracy.
- II. Political Social Reform and the Social-Democracy.
- III. Militarism and the Social-Democracy.
- IV. Municipal Social Reform and the Social-Democracy.
- V. Trades Unionism and the Social Democracy.
- VI. Co-operative Enterprises and the Social-Democracy.



# **CHANGES IN THE THEORY AND TACTICS OF THE (GERMAN) SOCIAL-DEMOCRACY.**

## **CHAPTER I.**

### **THE CAPITALISTIC STATE AND THE PARLIAMENTARY ACTIVITY OF THE SOCIAL-DEMOCRACY.**

Since the entrance of the Social-Democracy into the parliamentary bodies, deeply-rooted differences of opinion have arisen within the party concerning the election of these bodies, the party tactics at the elections, the participation in parliamentary labors, the consent to legislative plans, and finally the adoption of the budget as a whole.

The great differences of the conceptions among the Social-Democrats on all these questions are mainly to be traced back to the varying valuation of the existing political institutions as factors in the battle of the working class for freedom.

For instance, if a certain Social-Democratic wing conceived the existing state to be essentially an unchangeable and deadly enemy of the proletariat, they would, under given conditions, hold every recognition of the state institutions to be a violation of the socialistic-revolutionary principles of the proletariat. They perhaps held

the elective franchise to be a means of misleading and deceiving the masses, and so kept clear of the "ballot boxes."

Another group admitted only an agitational value for the elections and participation in parliamentary labor. Every positive sharing of legislative tasks of the parliament, every entrance into the parliamentary commissions seemed to them to be evil.

The various Social-Democratic groups further assumed very different attitudes with reference to election tactics. One group kept in view only the conduct of a battle over principles against the capitalist class and the capitalist state, and they assigned no value whatever to a winning of votes by a skillful adaptation of the temporary needs of the working class and of other social classes.

We will discuss the subjects here touched upon under the following heads:

1. The Elective Franchise and the Social-Democracy.

2. Social-Democratic Election Tactics.

3. Participation of the Social-Democracy in Parliamentary Activity.

*1. The Elective Franchise and the Social-Democracy.*

The universal direct elective franchise for the election of the North German Federal Parliament and for the Customs Parliament gave the Social-Democratic party the desired opportunity to summon their adherents under the red banner, and to count them. But were the Social-Democratic parties entirely clear as to the mean-

ing of this elective franchise in the battle for the emancipation of the working class?

Paragraph 1 of the statutes of the Universal German Workingmen's Association proclaimed: "Only through the universal, equal and direct elective franchise can a satisfactory representation of the social interests of the German working class and a real removal of class antagonism be brought about."

Liebknecht, on the contrary, ridiculed the idolatry which was practiced toward the universal franchise. "Particularly in Germany," said he in his well-known speech on "The Political Situation of the Social-Democracy," "many hold the universal right of franchise to be the wonder-working 'magic wand' which opens the doors of the civil power to the 'disinherited'; they live in the illusion that within the police and military state they can lift themselves out of the swamp of social misery by the universal voting franchise, as Muenchhausen once did by his own hair. Muenchhausen's wig ought to decorate the back of their heads!" And at the Stuttgart Congress of the Social-Democratic Labor Party in 1870, he poured out a flood of revolutionary expressions concerning the paltry phantom of the direct franchise. "Only in a free state," said Liebknecht at the Congress, "does the universal franchise bring about a real expression of the people's will. In a despotic state it can only be a means of deception and oppression." Should the German working class *vote for an instrument of class rule*, for the parliament, for the North German Federation, and the customs-

parliament? "The present state," argued Liebknecht at Stuttgart, "is an expression of class rule; it represents the might of capital, and is accordingly compelled to oppose all those efforts which tend to the removal of class rule, and the rule of capital. It must oppose them, for this concerns its very existence."

Both Social-Democratic fractions (Lassallean and Eisenacher) convinced themselves of the necessity of drawing the masses to the ballot boxes for the election of Social-Democratic representatives in the Reichstag. But it was only the universal franchise which compelled them to take the step of putting forth an active Social-Democratic elections agitation. They opposed the three-class voting system fundamentally. In taking part in this election they saw a solemn recognition of the three-class voting system. Taking part in the assembly and municipal elections seemed to them to be a heavy blow at Social-Democratic principles, a criminal desertion of the fundamental Social-Democratic demand for the universal voting franchise. In a convention of the voters of the third election precinct of Berlin, for the instruction of the presidency of the Universal German Workingmen's Association, it was declared: "The convention adopts the declaration made by Dr. Von Schweitzer, president of the Universal German Workingmen's Association, according to which only a (legislative) chamber resulting from the universal elective franchise can be regarded as representing the people. Every democratic party

must refrain from voting, so long as a three-class voting system exists."

*August Bebel* decided against working men taking part in the assembly and municipal elections more on the grounds of tactics than of principles. At the Dresden party convention in 1871 Bebel emphasized the fact that the money interests—that property and nothing else—had attained representation in the existing assembly of Saxony. This was also the most essential ground which decided the Social-Democrats of Saxony to refrain from taking part in any assembly election, even where the possibility of the victory of a Social-Democratic candidate might be in prospect.

Bebel recommended in a resolution that comrades of the party agitate by all means within reach for the introduction of the universal, direct and secret right of franchise for the election of the various assemblies, and also of all municipal representatives. By 1877 all scruples against sharing in the assembly elections in Saxony had been overcome. In that year a Social-Democrat invaded the assembly at Dresden. In Bavaria they decided in 1886 to take part in the assembly elections.

Not until 1900 did opinions clear up in Prussia concerning the participation of the Social-Democratic working class in the assembly elections. And a few words will be in place at this point concerning the history of the participation of the Prussian Social-Democracy in the assembly elections.

At Cologne in 1893, the momentous question

of the participation of the Social-Democracy in the assembly elections was first discussed. The party convention affirmed the idea, in accordance with an address by Bebel, that the Social-Democracy ought to withhold from the election, because there was no prospect of success, and because compromises with opposing parties, since these necessarily must lead to demoralization and to strife and discord in their own ranks, contradicted the principles to be observed by the party in elections. Bebel urged further that it would be an extraordinarily hazardous experiment to utilize the divisions among the opponents, and to compel the liberals to leave open to the working class a number of districts, by means of a compromise. Liebknecht remarked: "Compromises are treason, when they sacrifice a principle. We should reject every pact with another party which would actually demoralize our comrades, as would be unavoidable in a participation of our party in the three-class election for the Prussian assembly."

Now a passionate discussion surged here and there in the Social-Democratic ranks concerning the participation in elections. In the year 1897 the party consented, at the Hamburg party convention, to a repeal of the Cologne resolution. Opinions concerning this question were very much divided. The radical Parvus saw, in participation in the elections, a revolutionary act. Liebknecht conceived the support of the Liberals proposed by Parvus to be a more gross violation of Social-Democratic principle than the "Heinische Kanonenrede" was. (This was a

noted speech by Heine, favoring an allowance for cannon in the military budget. Trans.)

He further held that the Liberal majority, attained by our votes, would be a more dangerous evil than a Junker Agrarian or conservative majority in the assembly: "The Junker majority embitters the masses, drives them into our camp, while a Liberal majority would draw very many out of our camp. The sharper the battles, the better for us." A letting up of the struggle would cause a lessening of the contradictions, and with that a weakening of the party. At the Hamburg party convention (1897) the Mittag amendment was adopted by a considerable majority: "Compromises must not be entered into with other parties."

In the later struggles of opinion over the participation in the Prussian elections, Bebel deplored his strong expression concerning this participation, and raised the point that one could only speak of compromise when a political principle was to be abandoned; that such agreements with politically opposed parties openly before all the world was not treason to principle, and that support with equivalent return was no shame.

At the Mayence party convention (1900) the comrades were finally put under obligation to actively participate in the elections, by the election of their own electors. Agreement with the bourgeois parties at the elections should depend upon the approval of the party executive committee. At the assembly election conference of the Prussian Social-Democracy on April 27,

1903, the Mayence resolution was again adopted: they demanded the putting up of their own Social-Democratic electors in all places where it was possible to put them up. Concerning the tactics in choosing electors the assembly election conference also expressed itself at this time. The resolution of the conference said: "The decision concerning the attitude of the Social-Democratic electors in the election of assemblymen shall be determined, after the primary election results are established, by the Central Campaign committee in agreement with the (other party) district committees in question. In election districts in which a Social-Democratic candidate for assemblyman is put up, it is to be demanded that he should be voted for by the other parties on the first ballot. Should this plan not be carried out, the Social-Democratic electors shall vote only for Social-Democratic candidates on all ballots, and in all contingent test-elections refrain from voting."

## 2. *Social-Democratic Election Tactics.*

Once the Social-Democracy had decided to participate in the Reichstag and assembly elections, there sprang at once into view these weighty and fundamental questions: In what spirit do they participate in these elections? Are they concerned only with success? or do they, in full opposition to the bourgeois parties, propose to conduct their campaign as a purely proletarian class party?

The Eisenacher (Liebknecht-Bebel) group of the Social-Democracy released itself gradually

from the intimate embrace of the South-German and Saxon People's Party (Volkspartei). In Nuernberg and Fuerth the Eisenachers worked hand in hand with the People's Party. In Wuertenberg they marched also as yet mostly with the bourgeois democrats. In his "Battle for the Emancipation of the Fourth Class" Rudolph Meyer gives us a complete statement of the relations between the Eisenachers and the Democrats. He writes concerning it, among other things: "There existed in Wuertenberg likewise an independent Social-Democratic Labor Party, which had not *yet* broken with the People's Party. The delegates of the latter had declared at Nuernberg in 1868 that the democracy must raise itself to a Social-Democracy."

At the congress of this party at Stuttgart in 1873, Social-Democrats were also present. The social question and the relation of the People's Party to the Social-Democracy led to lengthy and passionate discussions. Their differences were clearly set forth from many points of view, but it was granted on both sides that on the common basis of freedom, in a common battle against absolutism it was both possible and desirable that they fight side by side. In the year 1872 the Thuringian branch of the "International" entered into an alliance with the People's Party.

At the Stuttgart Convention (1870) the Social-Democracy of the Eisenacher group laid down the following principles with reference to the attitude of the party towards its opponents: "The Social-Democratic Labor Party will not

enter into an alliance or compromise with any other party; but the Congress recommends, at those Reichstag or customs parliament elections where our party does not put up its own candidates, to give our votes to such candidates as, at least in essential political respects, accept our standpoint." The congress also recommended, in those districts where the party refrained from putting up its own candidates, the support of actual labor candidates nominated by other labor parties.

The Social-Democracy put up its own candidates throughout thereafter at the first elections, and only at test-elections between their opponents did they choose the "lesser evil"—the more liberal opponent, the one more inclined to the people's demands. The party convention of St. Gall (1887) departed from these election tactics. It enjoined upon the comrades to refrain from participation in test-elections between their opponents.

The Central Campaign Committee for the Reichstag election in 1890 violated this decree radically. Contrary to the St. Gall decree, the committee commanded the comrades everywhere at close elections under all circumstances to support such candidates as declared against the extension and perpetuation of the anti-socialist laws. "By this," said Bebel at Halle in 1890, in defending against the charges brought against the Central Campaign Committee, "it is charged that high treason against the party was committed. I want those speakers who are so full of moral indignation over

this to ponder first the fact that this is not a question of principles, but rather a question of tactics, which for eighteen years before the St. Gall convention was always answered in the sense that those candidates should receive our votes at close elections who pledged themselves to support certain demands which appeared to our party to be essentially important. This has been decreed at all party conventions until 1887."

The position of the party, that at the first elections no compromises should be entered into with opponents, was repeatedly and very energetically defended by the party comrades. When the Bavarian Social-Democrats decided in favor of participating in the assembly elections of the year 1886, a democratic paper stated that the Liberals were ready to come to an agreement with the Social-Democrats in case the latter carried enough electors to be able to hold the balance of power. A warning sounded thereupon in the "Social-Democrat" of October 28, 1886. The hope was expressed in the "Social-Democrat" article, that the comrades of Munich would not consent to a scandalous compromise of this kind, bidding defiance to all the traditions of the party. Social-Democrats should never become comrades-in-arms with other parties, but must always fight independently. That it would be party treason, especially when the opponents had the impudence to offer us a mandate. We could never be indebted to our opponents for the carrying of a district, because that would be corrupting for the comrades and paralyzing for

the elected officials. (Vollmar, Dresden, 1903.)

Something more than a decade after this article the Social-Democrats of the Grand Duchy of Baden concluded a compromise with the Democrats which was a compromise. Concerning this compromise William Kolb expressed himself, on December 18, 1897, in the "Neue Zeit" in the following fashion: "The Baden comrades have taken matters into their own hands in this election, having followed tactics which were condemned almost unanimously at Cologne, and at Hamburg at least by a considerable majority, as being abominable. We have achieved a two-fold success with these tactics. First of all we shattered the National Liberal majority in the assembly, which had existed nearly thirty years, which constituted the greatest obstacle to a liberal development in this "model country," and which was about to secure privileges to the money bags in the Baden house of representatives. But we have also a direct success to show for our party, in that we have captured two of the three free seats in the capital of the country, which had hitherto been a part of the secure possessions of the National Liberals.

"Now it is more than remarkable that at the Hamburg party convention, as also in the whole party press outside of Baden, until this hour (so far as my information goes) no voice of reproach has been raised on account of these tactics. On the contrary, this success of the Baden comrades was greeted everywhere with joy."

Karl Kautsky expressed himself in a thor-

ough-going article on the Baden compromise question in the "Neue Zeit." He wrote: "In Karlsruhe our comrades entered into a compromise with the Democrats under circumstances which did not at all enthuse the latter. Out of three districts we demanded two. Only with heavy hearts did the Democrats grant them; and a part of their people and of the Liberals, who were willing to give the Social-Democrats but one seat, were on that account inclined for a long while to vote against the Social-Democrats. \* \* \* We must not forget that the German people have handled the universal franchise for over a quarter of a century. This is a positive schooling for all parties and classes, and not only for us. We must not guard the political education of the masses too closely. Whatever attitude one may take concerning the arguments of Comrade Kolb, they at any rate clearly show how narrowly one may construe the meaning of the compromise. That in this narrowest sense the Hamburg party convention forbade a compromise in any case, there can be no doubt."

A few years later the Bavarian Social-Democrats concluded a compromise with the Centre during the assembly elections.

### *3. The Participation of the Social-Democracy in the Parliamentary Activity.*

The question of the participation of the Social-Democracy in the parliamentary activity blazed up early in the years of the German labor movement—those years in which the Lassalleans and the Eisenachers (followers of Liebknecht and

Bebel) made war with passionate fury. Although the point of view of the two Social-Democratic factions coincided strongly in their common estimate of the universal franchise, they behaved almost like fire and water when it came to their judgment concerning the parliamentary institutions of the northern federation and the customs parliament. The Lassalleans expressed unequivocally their sympathies for the northern federation, and accordingly participated with zeal in the parliamentary problems of the same. An irresistible wave of German patriotism swept at that time through the Lassallean labor masses. The national problems of Prussia played a large part in the parliamentary speeches of the Lassallean, Fritz Mende. With patriotic passion the Lassallean, Foersterling, declared himself for the watchword, "Through unity to freedom." In the Reichstag session of September 24, 1867, he said, among other things: "On the German question our principles declare for the entire removal of every confederation, every union of states, under whatever form it may be; the unification of all German tribes, welded within and organically throughout into one state unity, through which alone the German people will be able to achieve a glorious national future, and our watchword, 'Through unity to freedom.' That other watchword, 'Through freedom to unity,' which some set forth against this, we hold from our point of view to be deceptive, and to be one which will mislead the people."

The Lassallean, Von Schweitzer, assailed Liebknecht fiercely in the North German Parlia-

ment. "We on our side," said he on October 18, 1867, "want to fashion the North German Federation liberally—and in this I believe that we stand upon the same ground with the Liberal party—we desire to fashion it liberally: but gentlemen, we do not want to go into partnership with Liebknecht and his friends, the dispossessed princes and the jealous foreign countries, in an attempt to ruin and to destroy Prussia and the North German Federation.

"We have perceived that the Prussian nucleus of power has at length brought our German fatherland, so long despised, to a place of prominence and honor among the foreign powers, and will also do this in the future. And be it far from us, with them to disown and to criticize in Prussia those very qualities which last year a world at enmity with us was compelled admiringly to acknowledge. In a word, although we are dissatisfied with the inner conditions, and although we struggle to change these fundamentally, we stand within the fatherland, now in the process of reconstructing itself. They, however, stand outside of it, and want to stand outside. This it is which divides them from us, and this must be understood here distinctly."

Von Schweitzer published in the "Social-Democrat" his famous leading article on the ministry of Bismark. That article said in closing: "Two factors stand now ready for action in Germany: Prussia and the nation. Prussian bayonets, or German proletarian fists—we do not see a third." A strong imperialistic spirit moreover made itself repeatedly noticeable in the

"Social-Democrat." For instance, the following appeared on January 30, 1866: "In the interests of the propertyless class there remains only the Social-Republic (the ideal, the ideal state), in which the sovereignty of the people has arrived at reality, and has ceased to be the sovereignty of a single favored social class; or, a strong autocratic monarchy, which, filled with a natural jealousy of the ascendancy of the propertied class, must seek its support in the real people, the propertyless people, and on the other hand is also hardly in a position to abolish completely the basis of the class contrasts itself." (Joerg: History of the Social-Political Parties, p. 191.)

Very characteristic of the sentiment of the Lassallean leaders is the fact that in the year 1866 they supported the candidacy of Bismarck. And Bismarck was at that time elected to the Reichstag with the help of Social-Democrats. At such a time it was not astonishing that in one of the Rhenish cities the well-known leader, Toelke, gave a cheer for the King of Prussia! Vahlteich, deeply indignant, remarked concerning this fact, "Was not this course of action at the least hushed up in the 'Social-Democrat'? No! Was it condemned in that place? No! Did any storm of indignation arise among the members? No!" (R. Meyer: Battle of Emancipation, etc.)

The Eisenachers, the Social-Democratic followers of Bebel and Liebknecht, denied directly that the Northern Federation had any reason for existence. Amid the stormy confusion of the house, Liebknecht declared that the Northern

Federation signified nothing but the division, the servitude and the weakening of Germany.

In the year 1869 Liebknecht raised the question of participation in parliamentary labors to the high level of a great debate as to principle. In this speech he reduced the value of the parliamentary government for agitation to an invisible minimum. Narrow limits are set for the "orations from the windows" of the parliamentary government. A development of (socialistic) theories is impracticable, since no one can dictate a scientific treatise for the stenographers, unless by reading it off. Entire debates can be reported, according to the only authorized stenographic reports, by the larger newspapers alone. "What the laborers learn from the debates about the social question, they can learn from the labor papers. And what these furnish in the form of parliamentary reports, they can furnish much better, and much more carefully prepared, in the form of independent leading articles and treatises. In short, we cannot accomplish any direct influence upon legislation by our speeches. We cannot enlighten the Reichstag by speeches. We cannot diffuse any truth among the masses by our speeches, which we could not disseminate much better by some other method. Accordingly, what practical purpose do the speeches in the Reichstag serve? None! And purposeless talk is the amusement of fools. Not a single benefit! And now on the other hand, see the disadvantages: the principles sacrificed, the serious political struggle degraded to a parliamentary sham battle; the people misled

into the delusion that it is the mission of the Bismarckian Reichstag to solve the social problem."

According to Liebknecht, the Social-Democracy was deprived of any prospect of getting a majority in the Reichstag. The government would influence the elections in every way, especially by forbidding election assemblages, by confiscating election manifestoes, etc. "But grant," said he, "that the government makes no use of its might, either out of confidence of its own power or by a previous calculation, and it comes to pass, as is the dream of a certain socialistic phantasy-politician, that the Social-Democratic majority is elected to the Reichstag—what will the majority do? *Hic Rhodus, hic salta.* (Here is Rhodes, leap here!)

"Now is the moment to transform society and the state. The majority decrees an historic resolution, the new era is born—ah! no—a company of soldiers drives the Social-Democratic majority out of the temple. And if the gentlemen do not go quietly, a couple of guards take them away to the city prison, where they will have ample time to think over their Quixotic doings.

"Revolutions will never be carried out by permission of the high magistrates. The socialistic idea cannot be realized within the present state, but must overthrow the latter if it is itself to come to birth. No peace with the present state! And away with this worship of the universal and direct franchise!"

In the year 1869 Liebknecht was of the opin-

ion that the Social-Democracy should take a stand against parliamentary government, opposing it on principle and protesting against it. He soon realized the prospect of utilizing the elections for agitation purposes, however. Parliamentary government must now be used to revolutionize the brains. He repudiated his earlier opinion, viz.: that after the elections the Social-Democrats should go to the parliament only *to read a revolutionary declaration of protest, and then leave the house.* It was in this spirit that he had said at the Stuttgart Congress of the Social-Democratic Labor Party in 1870: "We dare not elect our delegates just to have them take a part in the comedy, but in order that they may protest against the absolutism which hides behind the parliamentary forms, and in order that they may denounce before the people those who give themselves to this play-acting. Our delegates shall not speak to the Reichstag, but over the heads of the members of the Reichstag to the people beyond."

The ideas of Liebknecht ruled the Stuttgart Congress. It adopted the following resolution of Liebknecht and Bebel: "The Social-Democratic Labor Party participates in the elections for the Reichstag and the Customs Parliament upon purely agitational grounds. The representatives of the party in the Reichstag and the Customs Parliament shall, as far as possible, work for the interests of the laboring class; but on the whole they shall maintain a negative attitude and use every opportunity to show up the transactions of both parties in their entire

emptiness, and to unmask them as mere farces."

In the Social-Democratic Labor Party large groups of enlightened workers gave their attention to the pressing problems of the day. As early as 1871 the Dresden Congress of this party plunged the Social-Democratic working class into the heated struggles of the time.

The efforts arising in the working class, towards the gaining of some betterments of their conditions within the limits of the existing state, found a definite expression at the Koburg party conference which—albeit timidly—prepared an open door for the legislative activity of the Social-Democratic representatives. At the Koburg party conference in 1874 Liebknecht placed the agitative activity of the Social-Democratic representative in parliament in the foreground of his arguments. "If you are able to put some legislation through for the benefit of the working class," said he, "very good, then you may do it and ought to do it. We are not dogmatists." In closing his speech he recommended the following resolution for adoption: "The Congress declares that the Social-Labor Party remains, with reference to the present political forms of Germany, in the attitude prescribed for it by the party principles, and participates in the Reichstag elections and through its representatives in the affairs of the Reichstag *essentially* only for agitative purposes."

✓ In the year 1876 radical currents came to the surface at the Gotha Congress. At this congress appeared among others the proposition of A.

Kapell and Dreesbach, as follows: "The Congress declares the refusal of certain of our party delegates to vote on the question of salary for representatives in parliament to be impractical, in that thereby uncertainties have arisen among the party comrades, which latter, since the granting of the salaries is a party demand, ought to be avoided."

Comrades Frick and Lingner proposed: "Every Socialist delegate to the Reichstag must vote with and for propositions which are contained in the demands of our platform."

Liebknecht defended his refusal to vote with the following arguments: "This is not at all a question of principle. We are concerned with a practical question of tactics. Here, where now for the sixth time the Reichstag has rejected with scorn a liberal program, it was our duty to expose the disgraceful hypocritical tactics of the Liberal party and tear off its mask.... The makers of this motion have a false conception of the relation of the Social-Democracy to the Reichstag. *Should the Social-Democracy take part in that farce, it would become a quasi-official socialist party.* The speaker does not take any part in such a farce and never will."

Bebel presented as the motive for withholding his vote at the balloting on the salary proposition, the following: "*The effectiveness of the Socialists in the present Reichstag would never be shown by success within, but rather outside, among the people.*" ✓

Referring to the organization of the fraction, the speaker remarked that there would always

be one of our representatives present in the Reichstag who could repel any unexpected attacks, and as soon as it might be necessary, call in the rest of the delegates. This commended itself on account of the saving in time and money. The organization of the fraction would be for the present, on account of the small number, rather unnecessary.

On the question of providing salary for the members of the Reichstag, the Reichstag aims only to give itself a halo of righteousness, after it had repeatedly let the matter drop at previous and frequent opportunities.

The same was the case in the deliberation concerning the constitution of the North German Federation and also that of the Empire. Where the Reichstag had power in its hands, it refused this demand. In demanding the proposition for the salary, it was only supplying material for the waste paper basket of the Bundes Rath. (The upper house, composed of delegates of the sovereigns of the German states.) To secure the adoption of such resolutions, he (the speaker) would not lend his aid.

In the year 1877 we see the Social-Democratic fraction enjoying a creative activity. Delegate Fritzsché declared at the party convention at Gotha, in 1877, that the Social-Democratic fraction in view of the inability of the ruling parties to accomplish anything useful in the department of factory regulation, had decided to bring in a bill for the protection of the working class. And in common with the Democratic fraction had at that time intended to propose a bill for preserving the secrecy of the ballot by casting the ballots in

sealed envelopes. They were quite ready for "positive co-operation" in connection with the parliamentary tasks. A quarter of a century passed by before the suggestion of the Social-Democrats became law.

In those days a Democrat also made the proposition that a parliamentary fraction should be constituted out of the Democrats and Social-Democrats, so that they might successfully oppose the imperious bearing of the other parties, which were destroying the freedom of speech. Fritzsche did not flatly decline this proposition, but desired first to get the opinion of the party convention. The Democrats, however, dropped the matter on their own account.

The dark days of the time of the anti-socialist laws began in the year 1878. But even in the midst of the destructive political hurricanes of these times, the Social-Democratic fraction did not lose the idea that they were to take hold of legislation in a positive manner for the benefit of the working class.

The Wydener Congress recommended taking part in the election for the Reichstag, the assemblies and the municipalities, for the purpose of agitation and propaganda. The Copenhagen congress of 1883 declared it to be the duty of the party, in connection with all efforts affecting the economic conditions of the people, no matter from what motive they may arise, always to guard energetically the conditions of the working class, it being of course understood, that they should not for one moment forget the whole of the Socialist program.

The party convention of St. Gall in 1887 de-

clared in a resolution: "The representatives in parliament must put the greater part of their activity upon the agitational and critical side, and in attending to the positive legislative action must take especial care that in the present attitude of the party groups, and under the present economic conditions, no doubt may remain and no illusion may be aroused concerning the meaning and import of this activity for the condition of the working class, in political as well as in social matters."

Liebknecht declared explicitly at St. Gall: "There is no doubt that, once we elect, we must give to the election and parliamentary activity, not only an agitational, but also a positive meaning." Bebel held that it was a critical situation, if by the Reichstag elections in the year 1887 the Social-Democratic fraction should be so strengthened that in a series of certain secondary questions they would have the balance of power. "The tendency to compromise, and to a so-called practical activity would then most likely grow so in our ranks that a division would probably arise among us."

During the time when the anti-socialist laws were enforced the Social-Democracy sought also to lay its hand upon the keys of legislative power. They introduced into the Reichstag session a bill for the protection of working men. In the session of 1885-1886 they introduced the same bill again.

The Social-Democratic fraction at that time decided for the greater part in favor of subsidizing the East-Asiatic and Australian steamship lines. In the third reading, however, the Social-Democracy rejected the steamship

subsidy bill. In 1884 the Social-Democracy sent a representative into the assembly of senior members of the Reichstag.

Against the attitude of the majority of the fraction in connection with the subsidy bill, and the sending of a delegate to the assembly of senior members, the Frankfurt party comrades published a vehement protest in the party paper, the "Social-Democrat". We give herewith some selections from this protest: "Even the beginning of the parliamentary activity of our delegates takes the form of a grave violation of our revolutionary principles, in that the fraction entered into the assembly of senior members and thereby directly recognized a certain form of government as existing by right, and accordingly sought to give it the right to rule over us, although every comrade is of the conviction that we are not actors in this comedy, but critics."

"However, we had not felt ourselves compelled to censure this step, if at the same time the universal wish of the party had been taken into account, and by a stronger attitude our representatives had insisted upon the opposition which exists between our representatives of freedom and those parties who are the representatives of political and economic servitude. And speeches have been made which a member of the People's Party might have made, but not a Social-Democrat."

"Coming now to the common parliamentary activity of the fraction, here again is something new to be remarked, namely, an inconceivable confusion, or more accurately, a lack of judgment in passing upon individual questions upon the

ground of our well known program. In this connection we mention especially the attitude toward the steamship lines. The various decisions which refused the subsidies to one line entirely, and as it were partially to another, and again favored a third under all circumstances, have a strong resemblance to an opportunistic opposition policy."

"While the comrades of the whole of Germany, and in all lands weary with the oppressive struggle, with iron energy strive to create an army and organize the proletariat, so that in some future time mankind may be released from oppression, our delegates appeared to be entering more and more into diplomatic undertakings with the representatives of the present system, and to be reconciling themselves with those."

Should it appear to you in the course of time that a portion of our delegates are seeking to mislead our revolutionary movement into the swamps of parliamentarism and are attempting to attach this movement to themselves personally, do not fail to prove to them that you have been emancipated in truth, not only from the dark spirit of the past and present, not only from the phrases, but even from your so-called leaders—who ought not to be anything but just our responsible representatives."

This declaration of the Frankfurt comrades is to be regarded as an expression of a principle: it is an opposition upon fundamental grounds against participation in the parliamentary affairs.

In this connection Ignatz Auer remarked, in his article, "To the Social-Democratic party con-

vention in Dresden" (*Soc. Monatshefte* 1903), "Since that time eighteen years have passed, and our comrades have uninterruptedly occupied seats in these 'miserable institutions'. Has any one discovered any of those evil results which were so much feared?" Auer reminded them at that time of the participation of the Social-Democrats in the commission for the embellishment of the Reichstag chambers, "in which one may discover innumerable monarchical knick-knacks."

During the time of the anti-Socialist laws the anti-parliamentary tendencies rose to a passionate surge in the party movement.

Even in the year 1887 the Social-Democracy had not fought its way into a settled attitude with reference to parliamentary action. Schippel, the intellectual leader of the opposition in the Berlin Social-Democracy, published a series of articles in the Vienna "Gleichheit" in March of 1887, under the title, "The Workingman, Parliamentarism, and the Bourgeois Parties", in which he emphasized, first: that the "actual danger and damage of parliamentarism" to the party had not been sufficiently brought to view; and second: "that a clear definition of the attitude of the Social-Democracy toward the other parties demanded an absolute rejection of every active or passive support of the other parties, even at the test-elections."

"A party like that of the German working class," said Schippel, "which does not wish to share in the rule of the possessing class, but wishes rather to destroy it, and for which every legislative and administrative measure has

significance only in so far as it brings this goal nearer and removes obstacles in the way of its final attainment, has very little to expect from our parliaments in any time near enough to be considered. And even if we do attain some small successes, it is only because the possessing class knows that behind the Social-Democratic representatives there stand hundreds of thousands of determined workingmen who are not to be alienated from Socialism by any tricks or political moves, because they know the truth about these, and also know the consequences of the rule of the capitalist class. Our future victory lies entirely in this unshakeable conviction, in this thought of the masses who are conscious of their goal. And in this, even to-day, lies our present political influence. Therefore, the successful education of the masses, and that alone, has a real and fundamental meaning for us"!

The number of districts gained by us has significance according to the opinion of SchippeL "only in that they permit a larger or smaller group of our people to address the masses from the open windows of the Reichstag, where the limitations of speech imposed upon the assemblages of the people are not known, and thus to awaken their sleeping self-consciousness."

"So far as voting and determining anything is concerned in the present parliaments, our thirty-six delegates are exactly as effective as twenty-four or twelve—provided of course that none of the little domestic quarrels arise in the ranks of the bourgeoisie themselves, when almost any kind of an accident may happen—but in those questions which concern us, concerning the

struggle between the exploiters and the exploited."

Schippel then pointed out the danger involved in the parliamentary activity, which is that our representatives would "wander this way and that in the labyrinth of the parliamentary skirmishes, and lose their keen sense of the great ruling forces of the public life. Many comrades who were formerly very radical, and therefore generally struck the nail on the head, face the danger of accustoming themselves in parliament to the super-wise but mistaken diplomacy which of course is used in the generally twisted calculations of the Reichstag, where the sincere representative of the working class cannot use diplomacy. This danger becomes the more serious in that the courteous, and even in part friendly relations in which colleagues in parliament are compelled to enter—and which we do not at all care to see done away with—that these relations, I say, may deaden their feeling for the sharpness of the opposition of interests against the other parties. In addition to that, devotion to parliamentary activity may easily bring with it a loss of contact with the proletariat."

Further, according to Schippel, "from a certain time on, the increase of the number of Reichstag members may become a positive damage to the agitation and so to the party."

Schippel's ideas on parliamentarism lasted for some time in the Berlin opposition. One leader of the opposition, William Werner, found an objection just in the very diligence of the party fraction in legislative affairs. Bebel answered him sharply at Halle: "They are not very danger-

ous—these master confusionists. This is shown even in the very contradictions of Werner's speech. First he wishes that we should only work for propaganda, and demands that the ideas of the Social-Democracy shall be taken to the masses of the people. But immediately afterward he desires that we shall demand the freedom of organization and assembly, the right to combine, and that we shall introduce bills to guarantee these things. What else have we done? We have always of course worked in addition for the protection of the working class. If such questions as the shortening of the hours of labor, prohibiting of child labor, prohibiting of Sunday labor, prohibiting of night labor, etc., are to be considered as secondary questions, then nine-tenths of our agitation has hitherto been really superfluous. But then the unions of the working men, without exception, are also superfluous."

"We have the tremendous following of the masses of the working-class and their confidence also, only because they see that we are working practically for their benefit and are not simply pointing them to the future of the Social-Democratic state, concerning which no man knows when it will come. The workers recognize in our party their political representation, because they see that we now are striving with all our might to elevate and improve the conditions of the workers, in so far as this is possible on the basis of the present bourgeois social order. This has been our attitude, and we must stick to it, if we wish to continue at all as a party."

The question whether the representatives in the Reichstag shall only speak as agitators in

parliament "from out of the windows", or if they should actually move their hands for promoting the interests of the working class in positive legislative labor, has not been raised by the larger groups of the Social-Democracy since the days of the Erfurt party convention. This question of the parliamentary tactics of the Social-Democracy is settled.

But a new question concerning parliamentary tactics soon arose in the Social-Democracy. The Social-Democracy has approved, in the Reichstag and in the assemblies, numerous budget items for educational propositions. Now, if they vote for a portion of the items, may they not also vote for the whole budget? This question was thrust upon the Social-Democracy by the assent of the Bavarian delegates to the budget. We experienced a heated discussion at the Frankfurt convention of the Social-Democracy, concerning the important theme: Can the Social-Democrats, without prejudicing their revolutionary principles, approve the budgets in the various states?

They rejected the motion which declared, that the adoption of the financial legislation as a whole in the various states is held to be a question of expediency, which is to be settled according to the conditions of time and place. On the contrary the amendment was adopted which declared: Representatives of the party must vote against the adoption of the budget as a whole, in so far as the approval of the entire budget is a recognition of the justification of the existing class state, or involves a vote of confidence for the administration.

Finally resolution number 114 (Bebel), with

the amendment of Stadthagen, was rejected. It read as follows: It is the duty of the representatives of our party, as in the Reichstag so also in the assemblies, to oppose and criticise with all sharpness the wrong conditions and injustices which have their roots in the class character of the state, since the latter is only a political form of organization, having for its purpose to protect the ruling classes; it is further the duty of the representatives of the party to use all suitable means to remove existing evils and bring about different conditions according to the purpose of our program. Further, as the administrations, as leaders of the class states, oppose the Social-Democratic efforts in the strongest possible manner, and use every means which seems to be effective for the destruction of the Social-Democracy, it therefore necessarily follows, that the representatives of our party in the assemblies, cannot give the administration a vote of confidence; and so far as the approval of the entire budget is a recognition of the justice of the existing class state or involves a vote of confidence for the administration, they must vote against the budget."

In the debate Vollmar said in substance: "It is not true that this whole affair has been presented as a special Bavarian matter; since the Badenese and the Hessians have done exactly as we have for many years.

"The Reichstag is the place where the great questions of principle are decided and the general spirit of the political life is established. The assemblies have more to do with administrative policies. The rejection of the entire budget is a

sharp weapon. In case of a violation of the constitution, for instance, it should be brought into play. But it must not be dulled by frequent use. In the Reichstag we voted against the budget, because four-fifths of it amounts to military appropriations. In the various assemblies the educational problems preponderate."

"The emphasis falls upon the attitude towards the various state budgets. Now, if we had not here, and always during the parliamentary and other activity of the party, maintained our attitude with reference to our principles, a negative final vote on the budget will not go far to invest us with the nimbus of the real and true Social-Democrats.

"This is a pure form, and all forms are purely matters of expediency, technical means, and change according to time and place. The important thing is the spirit in which it is handled. Therefore we are concerned here with a practical question.

"The Bavarians are not a studious people. They would not understand how, in a matter in which they are interested, one could vote at one time for, and at another time against it. The Bavarian comrades have aroused the greatest sympathy for themselves by enlarging the expenditures for schools, for science and for art, and for the improvement of the conditions of life for the small officials and the employees of the state. It would be an easy matter, however, to bring all our labor to nothing, if our opponents could furnish the proof that we have indeed pretty words, but no deeds. Whoever would win the people and educate them politically, must

make his political attitude comprehensible to the people. That is the case with our present tactics.

"With regard to principles and universal tactics for conditions in the Empire, the party convention is sovereign; but as to what tactics are demanded under the conditions in the states, that is naturally a matter for the party of the respective states.

"One example farther to show to what consequences under certain circumstances Bebel's motion would lead: Yesterday I asked Comrade Joest why they had voted for the budget in the Hessian assembly. 'That's easy to answer', replied he, 'the financial legislation contained two propositions, one higher and one lower. If we had not voted for the lower, we would have had to pay more taxes.'

"If Bebel's motion should be adopted, then in certain cases the delegates of our party in the assemblies would be forbidden to give the deciding vote for lower taxes. Briefly, I and all my Bavarian comrades hold every restriction with reference to such voting to be impolitic and impracticable."

Bebel replied: "The question of the approval of the budget is a question of confidence. All bourgeois parties that have wanted to overthrow an administration have begun with a refusal to adopt the budget. We must, so far as in us lies, cut off the possibility of ruling at all from any administration which wants to make Social-Democrats citizens of the second class, that wants to take away the breath of life from us.

"In the various assemblies, great questions of

principle do arise, and not only questions of administration. Out of the ten points in section 2 of the party program, nine can come up in the assembly.

"Now Vollmar says, 'We have to reckon with a peculiar people in Bavaria. The officials and railroad workers and farmers would not understand the contradictions in our attitude toward the individual estimate and the total estimate.' It is not any harder to make this clear to the people of Bavaria than it is in other places, and in all the rest of the assemblies we are in the same position with similar conditions obtaining there. Moreover, we have a long list of educational expenditures for the Empire to be approved in the Reichstag. But that we have voted against the total budget in spite of that has so far done us no harm.

*"It is one of the first considerations of constitutional life to be in a position to give the administration a vote of lack of confidence by a refusal to adopt the budget.*

"This matter of principle has received very little attention from us, and so much the more must the opportunity be seized upon to emphasize it now. That government does not exist in Germany to which we can give an expression of confidence. The Stadthagen amendment, proposing to insert in a closing sentence of our motion the word 'insofar', must be rejected.

"This amendment in my judgment would be unacceptable, and I would vote against it. Vollmar would at once justify himself, by means of this word 'insofar', in occupying exactly the same

attitude toward the Bavarian financial legislation that he has taken before.

"Consideration of the farmers and other similarly backward elements must not be allowed to settle this matter for us. You, (turning to the Bavarian delegates) are not the representatives of the Bavarian farmers, but of the intelligent and industrial workers, and you must keep our program pure and uncontaminated. If the farmers will not come to us in this way, the hardship of the time will soon teach them to think. The class character of the present day state must be emphasized with special energy in our agitation. This has been far too much neglected. When, however, the administration is nothing but the governmental expression of the possessing class, we cannot under any circumstances approve the budget, so far as it depends upon us to lengthen its life for only one day....

"Do not give way to opportunism nor to expediency. Let principle conquer."

Grillenberger expressed his opinion as follows: "I maintain that our approval of the budget was a more practical revolutionary act than the rejection of the budget after the manner of the bourgeois constitutionalists. I take the position of Plechanoff, that we are not to choose means which seem to be revolutionary, but rather those which have a revolutionary effect. The means which we chose was in so far a revolutionary and agitational measure, since it has brought many much nearer to us, who, in case we had rejected the budget, would have held aloof from us, we have shaken up great numbers, and have thereby prepared the way for the propaganda. If we

wanted to return like for like, we might remind the Saxons that under Bebel's leadership they approved the granting of means for the Schneckengruen colony. In approving the civil list the Saxons, 'enlightened' though they are, absented themselves so as not to appear discourteous. (A voice: That is not true.) The time may come, and much more quickly than any of us would believe, when it will be necessary for us to reject the budget so as to compel the recognition by the administration of some peremptory demand of the people. And when we hold the balance of power on account of the number of our votes, it is self-evident that we will observe different tactics than when our votes are of no effect. And then, we find ourselves to be in an entirely different position from other assemblies, since with us the government cannot go on without the budget, at least relatively without some temporary financial arrangements."

Auer protested against the idea that there is a provincial Bavarian Social-Democracy. "The Bavarians are always saying: 'The farmer, and again the farmer, and once more the farmer, thinks so and so.' But we do not court the favor of these farmers. Our duty is to interest ourselves in the farm workers, the menials. The workers for day wages, plow boys, hop pickers and peat cutters do not care whether we approve the budget for Minister Mueller or Feilitzsch. I was especially curious about the wording of the declaration of principles which you had given out in connection with the financial legislation. The words of Comrade Grillenberger have surprised

me very much. He said: 'On the other hand the fraction must understand that the outline of the financial legislation for the 22nd financial period contained a greater number of expenditures for progressive purposes, and that the approval of the bill was necessary for the carrying on of the business of the state.' In consideration of this, and with unrestrained upholding of their position upon our principles, they voted in favor of the financial legislation.

"That is indeed the point of view that is undoubtedly right for all members of any party now upholding the state, but not for us. Were you elected to the assembly in order to carry on the Bavarian social order in its present form? Should you not transform it, or—pardon the expression for once—undermine it?"

The question whether Social-Democratic delegates could give their votes of approval to the budget of the various assemblies, was gone into very thoroughly again at the party convention at Luebeck in 1901. The question of the adoption of the budget was regarded as a well-defined question of principle, by Rosa Luxemburg, Wurm, and Klara Zetkin, among others.

According to Rosa Luxemburg, the present governmental power assumes the task of upholding the capitalistic social order and defending it. The approval of the budget means the providing the means of existence for the class state, which is at enmity with the workers, and it excludes any withdrawal of assistance upon the ground of fundamental opposition. The administrations of the various states are to be regarded as integral parts of the German Empire,

blameworthy and responsible along with the latter.

Klara Zetkin emphasizes the necessity for our party to show up the deep and impassable gulf of opposition between the Social-Democracy and the whole bourgeois social order, and to enlarge the points of friction between our party and the bourgeois parties. Upon these grounds, under ordinary circumstances, the budget must be rejected.

According to Wurm, the Social-Democracy brings the fundamental opposition, in which the working class finds itself over against the capitalistic class state and its administration, to full expression by rejecting the budget. The denial of the budget is an integral part of our entire program of demands.

"In our opinion, the question of the adoption of the budget does not appear as an actual question of principle any more in the resolution of Bebel: for Bebel, in two very important questions, allowed for exceptions to the principle of the refusal to adopt. The resolution of Bebel on the budget question reads: 'Considering, that the various states hold the character of class states, equally with the Empire, and that they do not grant equal rights for the working class, but ought to be regarded essentially as organizations of the ruling class for the maintenance of their rule, the party convention declares, that it expects of the Social-Democratic representatives in the legislative bodies of the various states, that in their vote they will not put themselves in opposition to the party program, nor to the fundamental principles of the proletarian class

struggle, and especially that they will—under ordinary circumstances—refuse to adopt the budget as a whole. *An approval of the budget can only be given as an exception to the rule, for reasons which will arise out of unusual circumstances, and which seem to be compulsory.*

"In the following two cases Bebel permitted the violation of the principle of the refusal to adopt: one case, according to the substance of his remarks, may be that of a peculiar construction of the budget, (which indeed is not the same everywhere) and which has also already arisen in Hesse. This construction of the budget consisted in that a budget much more favorable for tax-payers would be defeated by their rejection of the budget, and a more unfavorable one would be loaded upon them. In such a case one would choose the lesser evil rather than the greater. The other case is as follows: In the Gotha assembly there are nine of our comrades and ten of our opponents. We will suppose that at the next election the number is reversed. Then of course we will expect that our comrades in consideration of their majority will constitute the budget according to their own judgment, and then they must vote for the budget. (Just so.) That explains itself. We cannot go so far that under all circumstances we will put a clog on the feet of our comrades."

Erhart Ludwigshafen opposed Bebel's point of view on the budget question. He said: "Bebel has named two instances in which we can vote for the budget. First of all we are to avoid the less favorable alternative. But what are the consequences in a class state? From the point of view

of the one who rejects the budget, it must be of equal significance whatever results our rejections may bring on. And secondly, he thought an approval would be justified when we, as a majority, had constituted the budget according to our principles. In my opinion, whoever anticipates such a thing in any time now within sight, may be a member of the parliament in the moon, but not among us. Even if we have three-fourths of the representation in the assembly, we will not be able to put through such a budget as we would like, and should we refuse the necessary result will be that they will shut the door in our face and take away the right of franchise."

Against the closing sentence of Bebel's resolution Singer expressed himself very sharply. "A question of the approval of the budget as a whole must be regarded by us from the point of view of confidence in the administration. Universally, it means confidence in the administration, and since we have no administration in Germany let it be whatever it may, to which we want to give a vote of confidence, to speak another word in this hall concerning that matter is superfluous."

"But I want to speak against the closing sentence of Bebel's resolution. He is willing to permit an approval of the budget as an exception to the rule, when on account of special conditions compelling reasons arise. All those defects and drawbacks which Bebel has so eloquently and rightly set forth before you, have the way opened for them through door and gate by that closing sentence. (Bebel: That is not conceivable.) Certainly, Comrade Bebel. Who then is to decide what are

exceptional circumstances? what are compelling reasons? They will decide at that time who have proposed to approve the budget." (Just so.)

The Luebeck party convention adopted Bebel's resolution. According to our opinion it cannot be regarded as a satisfactory close of the debate concerning the adoption of the budget.

The stormy debates of the Dresden convention over the acceptance of the Vice-presidency of the Reichstag by a Social-Democrat are still fresh in our minds. The resolution adopted by the convention on this question touches the relation of the parliamentary activity of the Social-Democracy to the capitalistic state. In this resolution the claims of the party on the positions of the first vice-president and the secretary were made good. But the undertakings of courtly duties and the submission to any duties whatever, not established by the constitution of the Empire, were energetically rejected. Just as decidedly did the party reject the approval of any means that were suitable for maintaining the ruling class in the administration.

They finally declared that the Social-Democracy, in accordance with the Kautsky resolution of the International Congress in 1900, cannot strive for a share of the power of the administration within the bourgeois social order.

## CHAPTER II.

### STATE SOCIAL REFORM AND THE SOCIAL- DEMOCRACY.

The idea of state social reform includes an extensive social and political field. We include under that term at present all state actions which contemplate the bringing about of a betterment in the conditions of life for society or for oppressed social classes. All these state actions depend upon an extension of the authority of the state, encroaching upon the spheres of private possession and private property.

The extension of the state authority is most thoroughgoing, most radical, when it takes over an entire branch of industry or an entire field of activity connected with the care for the common welfare, into the exclusive property and the exclusive control of the state, and for the special purpose of securing a development of the conditions of life for the whole of society or for oppressed classes of society.

For instance, the whole community of a national state can be shamelessly robbed by a ring of mine owners through the raising of prices. The nationalizing of the mines, with the simple purpose only of bringing about a regulation of the price, would prove itself in this case to be an effective social reform. Bebel raised his voice at one time with great influence for the

nationalization of the mines. The grain business, further, in the hands of a few wholesalers, could readily grow into a socially dangerous parasite. For more than ten years the nationalization of the grain business has received hearty approval in the ranks of the South German Social-Democracy.

The public health is still to-day to a great extent an object of profit-seeking private enterprises. The taking over of this branch of care for the public welfare is in many ways shown to be directly in the common social interest.

There is an entire series of transformations from private property to state property, transformations which mean a bettering of the social conditions of life, and which we would indicate directly as state-socialistic. Those transfers from private possession to social possession, which are brought about for the exclusive, as it were for the one-sided enriching of the capitalist class, present themselves as purely state-capitalistic. We must decide each case for itself, as to whether a socialization of property takes on a state-socialistic or a state-capitalistic character.

Those state enterprises which aim at an extension of the right of organized society—of the state, for the furtherance of the universal security and welfare, over against the rights of individual private persons or groups of persons, which are planned in the spirit of social reform, are related to state-socialistic ideas. Society is interested under all conditions, even in its highest ranks, in body and soul, in the physical, mental and moral health of its entire membership. The epidemic diseases of the back tenements prop-

agate themselves in the front dwellings. The state seeks occasionally to improve by all means the conditions of life of its members, by dwelling-house legislation, by social insurance legislation, and by legislation for the protection of the workers. A series of these state measures can of course be planned merely for the outward quieting of a revolutionary class, and for the actual protection of a privileged minority. All such actions might with good reason be denied the name of "social-reform". We understand, accordingly, under state social reform, in connection with the previously characterized state-socialistic actions, all encroachments of the state upon the rights of private persons for the purpose of preserving and promoting the conditions of social life.

We include therefore under state social reform:

1. State Socialism, the transfer from private possession to state possession and state management.
2. State dwelling-house legislation.
3. Social insurance legislation.
4. Labor legislation.

#### I. STATE SOCIALISM AND THE SOCIAL-DEMOCRACY.

The German Social-Democracy has never assumed the position upon principle, of a complete negation of state-socialism; and accordingly has on that account experienced hardly any change. And so we can limit our presentation to certain historical facts, and to a brief indication of the various party views concerning state-socialism.

The question of socialization has played a part in the Congresses of the international labor movement. At the Lausanne Congress the socialization of the means of transportation was discussed; and at the Brussels Congress the socialization of the quarries, mines, and the entire landed property was under consideration. At the congress of the Social-Democratic Labor Party held at Stuttgart, 1870, the idea of socialization was applied also to the present state. The following paragraph was added to the Brussels resolutions: "As a transition stage from the private management of the farm lands to the social management, the congress demands that a beginning be made with the state lands, entailed land, church lands, communal lands, the mines, the railroads, etc., and declares itself therefore opposed to the change of any of the above-mentioned state and community lands into private property." This resolution was presented by Bebel and adopted by a large majority.

In a draft of the Erfurt party program, which was drawn up by the party executive committee, one section was directed against state-socialism. Von Vollmar proposed that it be stricken out on the following grounds: "Our program must present general propositions dealing with all phenomena of the social political life and the party battle, and should not assume any attitude with reference to individual antagonistic propositions. If we are to take a position especially against state-socialism, we must logically attack also other economic conceptions which are opposed to capitalism in a form regarded by us as wrong. And there is this to be said further, the

name of "state-socialism" may be applied not only to the system indicated, but also to a series of measures which we at some time must defend. If you will, every socialization, every transfer of a branch of industry out of private hands into the hands of the state can be called state-socialism. And yet we have not only voted for the nationalization of the railways, but we have since then worked directly to the end that the state should either itself directly take over, or at least bring under its directing influence other industries which have a special meaning for society. And we do this rightly, since this is a necessary means for the gradual introduction of better social conditions. It is therefore impossible for us to stigmatize in advance any such state-socialistic measures."

The section against state-socialism in the draft of the program was accordingly stricken out, and there appeared in the Erfurt program the socialization of industrial insurance and its institutions, the control of the legal service, the apothecaries, the sanitary board, the undertakers,—for in the program the taking over of industrial insurance by the state, the gratuitous legal assistance, medical service, drugs and undertaking, can have no other meaning.

The resolution of Von Vollmar and Liebknecht at the Berlin Social-Democratic convention was directed against socialization upon purely fiscal grounds and was accordingly equally against state-capitalism. The content of the resolution was that state-socialism so-called, in so far as it aimed at socialization for fiscal purposes, would simply put the state in the place of private

capitalists, and give it the power to put upon the working class the double yoke of economic exploitation and political slavery. State-socialism in the form of social reform, was further characterized in the resolution as a system of half-measures, which by small concessions would bring about an estrangement of the working class from the Social-Democracy. The Social-Democracy does not disdain, however, on that account, to promote such measures for the purpose of improving the lot of the working class, but they regard them only as payments on account.

A fully developed product of a narrow-minded state-capitalism was presented to the German Social-Democracy in the German Reichstag in the case of the tobacco monopoly. Von Vollmar criticized this monopoly with cutting bitterness in the Reichstag session of May 12, 1882. The expropriation of an entire branch of industry upon grounds of the public welfare would have a destructive effect, according to his point of view, since it involves the fundamental assertion that society alone is the source of all rights. This expropriation ought not to begin with the socialization of an industry so scattered as the tobacco industry. Von Vollmar said that according to our principles, the concentrated industries ought first to be taken over, and made the property and industry of the state. Such for instance, are the railroads, the mines, the steel industry, the sugar factories, etc.; above all the great landed possessions should be included.

In his speech Von Vollmar emphasized strongly the idea that always, and rightly, certain

branches of industry must be kept in the foreground in connection with the socialization of industry; since the Social-Democracy must not extend the means of power of the present state by an ill-advised socialization.

"It is very important for the Social-Democracy", said Von Vollmar, "that the government, which has now already almost the entire force of the state—the most effective resources of the nation—at its disposal, which already has a superior force, should not in any manner have more power placed at its disposal. Just realize what tremendous power the government has in its hands over the workers. Gentlemen, the aims of the government are all alike to me. I judge by their deeds, and according to their deeds they have no right to raise the claim that we should accept their words unconditionally in good faith. Just recall—I mention here what has already been mentioned by one speaker—the well known decree of the 4th of January. They knew at that time very well how to employ coercive measures against the officials of the state and to furnish them with strict instructions for the elections. It is true that the justification of the well known "patrimony of the dispossessed" did not come up again after it had served—or had not served—its purpose as an election bait.

"But there is absolutely no doubt, and the state secretary, Herr Scholz, has himself brought it to light, that social-reform is concerned intimately with finance reform, to which also the tobacco monopoly belongs. And that a portion of the money which is to be raised from this,

will undoubtedly be used for the purpose of this reform. Therefore the financial and social reforms are somewhat related."

The very weighty objections which are held against the extension of the power of the present state, were once more subjected by Von Vollmar to his critical lens in an essay "Concerning State-Socialism." "Now it is argued", he said, "that the state could oppress so much the more, since it would be the autocrat in the given industry, from which it would result that there would be no possibility of the workers securing employment with any competing employer; and because, further, in the case of the state, to the economic power would be added the political. This argument would surely apply if it had to do with the socialization of the smaller industries, but as we have said, it is established, as far as the Social-Democrats are concerned, that only highly concentrated industries should be concerned in the industrial socialization. But in so far as in such industries a greater degree of constraint appears, it is simply a consequence of the concentration of industry carried to a higher degree, especially in the case of monopolistic industries, and without regard to whether it is a state or a private industry. For those few managers who divide a monopoly up among themselves, very soon develop a solidarity as against the working men, by means of arguments, black lists, etc., so that there is little or nothing to be expected from utilizing their opposing competition; and so far as the strengthening of oppression by the addition of political might is concerned, permit me to inquire whether a monopolistic private enterprise

*he recognises  
party character's*

cannot and does not employ the same tyranny over the workers by reckless use of economic might, as would be possible in the case of the state. Or is it possible to conceive a greater enslaving and subjection of the working men in civic and personal matters, than is found now in the cases of Stumm, Krupp, and similar barons of industry? And he who will recall the examination of returns in the Reichstag, will know that no coercing in the state industries is so systematic and shameless as that in the private industries conducted on a big scale."

According to Von Vollmar, the Social-Democracy must examine very carefully every state socialistic measure, with reference to its social-political effect, and must investigate it scientifically, (since the party is no fanatical advocate of socialization by the state) when certain grounds of opposition do not preponderate. "But where the socialization of an industry, either on account of its economic concentration, or because of the public nature of the service rendered, constitutes economic progress, and a relative benefit for the common good, we must advocate it."

A state-socialistic debate took place at the Breslau convention in the year 1895. At this time a proposition of the agrarian commission for the party program, which had a decided state-socialistic stamp, was discussed. It contained among other things the retaining and the increase of the public land domain; the management of the state and community lands on their own account; giving the state credit to co-operative societies; socialization of mortgages, debts and

loans on land; a socialization of chattel and real estate insurance, etc. Bebel agreed to all these state-socialistic propositions. He recalled the fact that the nationalizing of the railroads had been accomplished with the agreement of the Social-Democracy. "That which applies to the railways, applies also to the forestry. Have we any objections to the enlarging of the state forests and thereby the employment of workers and officials? The same thing applies to the mines, the salt industry, road making, the post office and the telegraphs. In all of these industries we have hundreds of thousands of dependent people, and yet we do not want to advocate their abolition, but rather their extension. In this direction we must break with all our prejudices. We ought only to oppose state industry, where it is antagonistic to culture, and where it restricts development, as for instance, is the case in military matters. Indeed we must even compel the state constantly to take over means of culture, because by that means we will finally put the present state out of joint. And lastly, even the strongest state power fails in that degree in which the state drives its own officers and workers into opposition to itself, as has occurred in the case of the postal service. The attitude which would refuse to strengthen the power of the state because this would entrust to it the solution of the problems of culture, smacks of the Manchester school. We must strip off these Manchesterian egg-shells."

Liebknecht at Breslau further addressed himself in rather sharp fashion to the ghost of the "strengthening of the class state", which was

"walking" at that time. "But we are concerned in these proposed demands first of all about the strengthening of the state power. In all similar cases we have decided in favor of practical activity. We allowed funds for the North East Sea Canal; we voted for the labor legislation, although the proposed laws did decidedly extend the state power. We are in favor of the state railways, although we have thereby brought about exactly that which Kautsky and Frau Zetkin have presented as the most reprehensible and the most dangerous, namely, the dependence of numerous livings upon the state."

These expressions of the most eminent leaders of the Social-Democracy indicate sufficiently, that this party has not assumed an attitude of fundamental opposition to state-socialism, but that they have regarded socialization under certain conditions as a means of destroying capitalism from within.

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## 2. STATE DWELLING-HOUSE REFORM AND THE SOCIAL-DEMOCRACY.

In the modern metropolis and factory city the dwelling-house famine has arisen to its full extent, with all its horrors and atrocities. It fell so brutally upon our five senses that these shrank back as though smitten with a mighty pain. We called for deliverance, for salvation out of the misery of the dwellings which allowed uncounted troops of the poor children of the metropolis to wither and to die even in the first years of their ashen-grey existence—for of a joyful spring time

we cannot, alas, speak in their cases. We looked around us for a saviour, and thought we had found it in the state. But this very state was soon pictured to us by our masters and teachers, not as a supernatural redeemer, but as an iron handed policeman.

The message rang out to us from Engels' writings on the dwelling-house question, that a thorough-going dwelling-house reform under the dominion of capitalism is a Utopia. Frederick Engels, in his treatise on the dwelling-house question, in the "Volksstadt" in 1872, and which was revived again in the year 1887 for that specific purpose, gave a sharp blow to the petty bourgeois socialism, which according to Engels, had its advocates even in the Social-Democratic fraction in the Reichstag.

Engels justified the republication of his series of articles in the "Volksstadt" on the dwelling-house question, finally, with the following reflection: "But lastly, the bourgeois and petty-bourgeois socialism in Germany is strongly represented until this very hour. On the one side indeed, the socialists of the chair and philanthropists of all kinds, with whom the desire to transform the working class into owners of their own homes, still plays a great part, over against whom my work is still very much in place. On the other side, in the Social-Democratic party itself, even in the Reichstag fraction, a certain petty-bourgeois socialism finds its representation. And it appears in a form which indeed recognizes the fundamental point of view of modern socialism, and the demand for the transformation of all means of production

into social property, as justified, but declares its realization to be possible only in a distant, practically inconceivable time. And so, our activity then for the present must be confined simply to a social patch-work, and we can even under certain circumstances, sympathize with the reactionary efforts for the so-called 'elevation of the working class'.

"The existence of such a tendency is entirely unavoidable in Germany, which is the land of the shop-keeper class par excellence, and at a time when the industrial revolution is uprooting violently and in large masses this old and deeply rooted shopkeeperdom. It is also entirely without danger for the movement, when we consider the wonderfully wholesome good sense of our workingmen, who have just within the last eight years guarded their own interests so brilliantly in the battle against the anti-socialist law, the police and the judges. But it is necessary to recognize that such a tendency does exist."

Frederick Engels, in the introduction of his "Dwelling-House Question" in the year 1887, emphasized the idea that the kernel of the solution presented for the dwelling-house question by the big business men and the little business men, was contained in the idea of the ownership by the worker of his own dwelling. Such a solution of the dwelling-house question evidently falls outside the limits of the socialistic program. The Social-Democracy so far, at the most only accepted co-operative building societies, with the common possession of the houses and common management.

Now, at the same point where Frederick

Engels estimated the social meaning of property in dwellings for the worker, he makes several very characteristic remarks about dwelling-house reform, as also concerning social reform in general. According to Engels, no reform can move by one hair's breadth the brazen law which allows the worker only the cost of the production of his labor power, the value of his maintenance and reproduction.

"We will assume", says Engels in his "Dwelling-House Question," "that in a given industrial district it has become the rule for every worker to own his own little house. In this case, the working class lives in that district rent free; the cost of dwelling house does not enter into the value of their labor power. Every narrowing of the cost of production of labor power, i. e., every permanent reduction of the price of the necessities of life for the workers brings about, on the basis of the 'iron law of political economy', a reduction of the value of labor power at once, and is followed consequently by a corresponding fall in the wages of labor. And so the wages of labor will fall on account of the average saving in the cost of rent, that is to say, the worker will pay for the rent of his own house—not as formerly in money to the house owner, but in unpaid labor to the factory for whom he works. In this manner the savings of the worker invested in his little house come to be a kind of capital, *not capital for him, but capital for the capitalists who employ him.*

"By the way, the above holds true in the case of all such so-called social reforms which aim at saving and at cheapening the means of living

for the workers. Either they become universal, and then are followed by a corresponding reduction of wages, or else they remain entirely sporadic experiments, and their very existence as separate exceptions shows that to carry them out on a large scale is inconsistent with the existing capitalistic system of production.

"Let us suppose that in some district it happens that through a general introduction of co-operative consuming societies, the means of living for the workers are made 20% cheaper; then the wages must finally fall there in the neighborhood of 20%—that is to say, in the same proportion in which the means of living enter into the cost of living for the worker."

The dwelling-house reform, accordingly, will bring about no betterments in the common conditions of life for the worker. If he lives cheaper on account of this reform, he will not be able on that account, with this saving in his cost of rent, to improve the conditions of his living. The reduction of the cost of rent only allows the cost of maintenance of the worker to fall lower, and with it also their wages. Wages in capitalistic society remain always limited to the cost of production of labor power, therefore dwelling-house reform as a means of raising the general condition of the working class, has a very ephemeral worth.

According to Engels, the bourgeoisie can only solve the dwelling-house problem in the manner proposed by Haussmann. That is, they will extend straight and wide streets through the working class quarters, line them on both sides with luxurious buildings, and then allow the

scandalous slums to arise somewhere else, often in the immediate neighborhood.

The breeding places of pestilence, the most infamous holes and pits, wherein the capitalistic method of production shuts up our working class night after night—these are not done away with, they are only *shifted*. The same economic necessity which produced them in the first place, produces them again in the second place.

And as long as capitalistic production exists, so long is it foolish to wish to solve singly, the dwelling-house question or any other social question concerning the fate of the working class. But the solution lies in the abolition of the capitalistic method of production, and in the appropriation of all the means of life and labor by the working class itself.

The bourgeois solution of the dwelling-house question founders upon the opposition between the city and the country. The dwelling-house question can only be solved when society is far enough transformed to attempt the removal of the antagonism between the city and the country, which is developed to its extremity by the present capitalistic society. "*Capitalistic society, so far from being able to remove this antagonism, must on the contrary make it keener every day*". Only by the solution of the social question, through the removal of the capitalistic method of production, will the solution of the dwelling-house question be made possible. To solve the dwelling-house question, and to maintain the modern great cities, is a contradiction in terms.

The present power of the state according to Engels, sees itself reduced to a pitiful impotence

in the presence of the dwelling-house famine. Even the English dwelling-house legislation has only this significance, that in the hands of an administration either controlled or influenced by the workers, it will become a powerful weapon for making breaches in the present social situation.

Engels criticises also the proposition of the bourgeois dwelling-house reformer by the name of Sax, who demanded of the administration of the state that it should bring to bear upon the dwelling-house famine all the measures at its command and in a comprehensive extent. "That means", Engels continued, "that they shall erect barracks, veritable model dwellings for their subaltern officials and servants;" (but these are not workingmen) "and to grant loans to municipalities and societies and also to private persons, for the purpose of bettering the dwellings of the working class, as is done in England. But even in England," said Engels, "there has been very little accomplished in this matter; even according to the confession of Herr Sax. And the slight ability, indeed the impotence of the state in the matter of dwelling-house reform, finally finds its basis in the capitalistic character of the state itself."

"That the present state", continued Engels, "neither can nor will help in the present trouble concerning the dwelling-house question, is as clear as sunlight. The state is nothing but the total power of the possessing classes. What the individual capitalists do not want, (and these are the only ones here in question, since in this matter the possessors of land appear in their

capacity as capitalists) that their state will also not desire. When the individual capitalists complain indeed of the dwelling-house famine, but are with difficulty moved to put a slight stop to its most astonishing consequences, then the collective capitalists of the state will also not do much more. At the most, it will only see to it, that that degree of superficial concealment, which has once become customary, is everywhere carried out equally."

In the presence of an argument of Engels, the key-note of which was the proof of the social worthlessness of the state and co-operative dwelling-house reform, the theoretical and practical activity of the Social-Democracy in the field of the dwelling-house problem ceased for a long time. After the repeal of the anti-socialist law, Dr. Ad. Braun appeared in the arena, with the reports of the Berlin dwelling-house commissions, in the *Berlin Arbeiterbibliothek*, and then once more a very significant quiet settled over the Social-Democratic book market. Only in the year 1900 might one perceive there the title of a new and larger book, "The Dwelling-House Question and the Social-Democracy", by Lewis Cohn, published by M. Ernst, in Munich. In this very thorough-going work, which shed light on all parts of the dwelling-house question, Lewis Cohn complained of the scarcity of literature, written by the comrades of the party, concerning the dwelling-house question. And in that matter he hit the mark. The great work of C. Hugo, concerning "German Municipal Administration" brought together valuable information concerning the municipal dwelling-house question.

Only in the end of the 90's of the last century did the dwelling-house reform activity on the part of the Social-Democracy arise strongly in the German Reichstag and in the various assemblies. Once more the minds were directed to the great question, "what part can the state play in the matter of dwelling-house reform?" In the Reichstag session of Nov. 14th, 1899, delegate Schmitt, of Frankfurt-on-the-Main, supported the petitions for the passage of an imperial dwelling-house law. He approved the aiding of the voluntarily organized building societies, and referred to the principles of The Society for an Imperial Dwelling-House Law. This society as its name indicated, called in the first place upon the Empire, the state, to undertake an energetic dwelling-house reform. Among other things, it raised its voice for the "removal of the worst dwellings and the unhealthy portions of the city, by investigation of dwellings, by inspection, and by the appropriation of zones to secure tracts for rebuilding; for a reform of the methods of building by means of a revision of the building ordinances and plans of construction; for the furnishing of cheap building lots through the activity of the state and community in this direction; and for "reform of the right of eminent domain".

On the 20th of October, 1899, delegate Ehrhardt declared in the Bavarian chamber the necessity of a thorough-going dwelling-house law. "As a first demand," said he, "in connection with the dwelling-house question, we recognize the necessity of an extensive official dwelling-house inquiry, which must furnish the basis for

a thorough-going procedure. We desire, therefore—in a dwelling-house law—and without such we cannot settle this question—that a minimum of air space which is necessary for the people inhabiting the space, be established. We wish further to have an extensive dwelling-house control. We are in no way opposed to the supporting of the co-operative societies, we right gladly lend them a hand, so long as it goes forward under proper precautions, in order that no speculators may hide behind these co-operatives and thus secure for themselves certain private benefits. We desire in this matter an interference with the present private rights. I am greatly pleased at my colleague, Dr. Yeager, in that he expressed himself so frankly in this connection. I only wish that he might find an echo in the ranks of his party for his point of view—since he is for expropriation. We hail that, and wish to say that it is one of the first fundamental conditions for the regulation of the dwelling-house question."

In the winter of 1900 the Social-Democratic fraction of the Reichstag brought in the following proposition, namely, that the Reichstag should pass a resolution "requesting the united governments to submit to the Reichstag at the earliest possible moment a bill relating to the regulation of dwellings; and especially a standard provision with reference to the quality of dwellings and the carrying out of the dwelling-house inspection, as also the creation of the Imperial Department of Dwelling-House Regulation". One speaker referred, according to the Report concerning the parliamentary activity of the Social-

Democratic Reichstag fraction, to the close and inseparable relation of dwelling-house misery to the entire economic conditions. So long as the private capitalistic method of production exists, all care for the dwelling-house conditions can only be patchwork. However, just as we press for abatement of existing abuses in all various quarters, so it is here also.

According to the Report of the Social-Democratic Reichstag fraction (1901), in the budget of the imperial department of the interior, two million marks was set apart at the first to promote the provision of suitable dwellings for the workingmen and for the poorly paid officials in the industries and departments of the Empire, by the allowance of aid for private as well as for socially-beneficial enterprises in the nature of building societies, co-operative building associations and building companies. We declared that we regarded these two million marks only as a payment on account, and that we should strive every year for an increase of the amount. We voted also for the following resolution adopted by the budget-commission at the suggestion of our side: "The Reichstag expresses the hope that the sums allowed will only be expended in cases where, in fixing the price of the rent of the buildings erected by the aid of the government, only the customary interest and redemption of the capital used in the building of the houses together with the cost of repairs and management shall be brought into account, and that the houses thereafter shall not serve any other purpose whatever."

In the year 1901, at the Social-Democratic

*he's interested  
in views on concrete  
topics*

party convention at Luebeck, Dr. Suedekum developed systematically the idea of a very effective state dwelling-house reform. He made a ringing appeal to the Social-Democracy to capture one position of power after another in the bourgeois society. In his resolution, Dr. Suedekum brought out very forcibly his principal point, that the dwelling-house question is a question of power. He said further in this resolution: "In the face of this mighty social phenomenon of the scarcity of dwellings, the means of aid of the bourgeois social reformers prove themselves to be unwholesome, partly on account of their character, partly on account of the method in which they are carried out, according as they are determined by the ruling political forces in the state and community. An effective attack upon the scarcity of dwellings presupposes a decided influence of the organized proletariat in the state and community. This alone guarantees that this great, many-sided task will be taken hold of in its whole extent and by all available means."

Dr. Suedekum in his resolution therefore demands from the Empire: (a) the passage of a national dwelling-house law, including among other things standard forms of building regulations, dwelling-house inspection, credit propositions and the right of eminent domain; (b) establishment of a national dwelling-house department,—supervision and investigation of the whole extent of dwelling-houses, central boards for dwelling-house inspection and statistics; (c) reform of the renting rights, of lease litigation and of execution.

*Limited  
viewpoint*

In the activity of the building societies, so far as they are based upon the foundation of the common property and furnish no favors to the interests of speculators, the party convention recognized a temporary useful supplement to the measures to be used by the communities, the state and the empire for the alleviation of the scarcity of dwellings; but the party convention sounded a warning against the over-valuation of the significance of the various associations. The allowing of public means for the erection of houses to private persons or societies, for the erection of working class houses in the interests of contractors, or to be transferred to private possession, is to be opposed. Charitable arrangements in the sphere of dwelling-house reform are to be repudiated.

From the various states the party convention desired among other things: an extension of the right of eminent domain for the communities, and transforming of the procedure of expropriation for their benefit; and the reform of the railroad tariffs.

The resolution closed with the following idea: The carrying out of our demands is hindered by the lack of political rights on the part of the working class, by the position of power which the possessing class hold in the parliamentary bodies, and especially through the privileges which the landlords have in the municipal government. The battle against the scarcity of dwellings is in the last analysis the battle of the working class for political power in the state and community. And so the battle against the scarcity of dwelling-houses merges also into the

great battle for the emancipation of the proletariat.

With the unanimous adoption of the Suedekum resolution, the German Social-Democracy declared itself for a deep and thorough-going state reform of dwelling-house conditions.

### 3. SOCIAL INSURANCE LEGISLATION AND THE SOCIAL-DEMOCRACY.

It was at the party convention in Munich in 1902 that the Social-Democratic party as a whole first declared its attitude with regard to working men's insurance, to social insurance. In assuming this attitude toward this legislation, it did not in any way indicate a renunciation of German working men's insurance. It demanded nothing else but carrying out of the fundamental ideas of social insurance. The idea of compulsory insurance, which was found in an imperfect form in German working men's insurance, was also thought through completely by the Social-Democracy. In the resolution which Molkenbuhr spread before the convention, gleamed the fundamental outlines of an actual right of existence for the worker. The worker who is sick, invalid, injured by accident, aged or unemployed, ought never to perish in a society of citizens, but in all the necessities of his life, a certain minimum of existence should be guaranteed. He has a right to this minimum, and ought never to have to beg it from a merciful board of committee. Indeed the Molkenbuhr resolution established upon a fixed basis the existence, not only of the proletarian himself, but also that of his family.

Accordingly, it demands on that account the introduction of state care for widows and orphans. Naturally the Molkenbuhr resolution attacked the present scattered arrangements for insurance, and strove for a unifying of all insurance. Further, it was not content with the partial support involved in the insurance legislation, but plead for full support, corresponding to the loss of labor power suffered. And then it promulgated energetically the principle of the fullest administration of the insurance arrangements by those who are insured. Where the German labor insurance says that a portion of the laborers should be insured against sickness, etc., the Molkenbuhr resolution says that the whole working class, and all persons of similar economic situation should be insured against sickness, etc. Where the German labor insurance provides for the workers only a certain measure of self-administration, the Molkenbuhr resolution demands the fullest self-administration. While the German labor insurance only offers to help the sick, the invalid and the aged worker, the Molkenbuhr resolution desires state insurance for the unemployed proletarian, and for the widows and orphans of the laborer. The Molkenbuhr resolution is just a logical carrying out of the principle of German labor insurance.

The idea of state compulsory insurance for the workers, which the first accident insurance proposition expressed, seemed to the bourgeois parties, and especially to the National Liberal delegate Bamberger, to be a fatal step over on to the ground of the socialistic theory. This delegate saw a revolutionary undertaking in the accident

insurance proposition, and declared that the Convention of the French Revolution is our direct predecessor. Bamberger emphasized the fact that Bebel had made a speech in the year 1879 on the occasion of just the proposition to improve the accident insurance proposition, and that he had sketched in that speech exactly the fundamental basis of this very law which was now before him. "I will not deprive Herr Bebel of the pleasure of reading verbatim the passage in which the economy of this law, according to his presentation, is contained; but I can say that after I had once more read the speech this morning, it occurred to me that I do not know why Herr Bebel is not the reporting member of the economic department of the imperial government."

Indeed, that speech in the Reichstag which Bebel delivered the 26th of February, 1879, is in a social-political connection especially worthy of remark. In his address in connection with the interpellation of Hertling concerning the amendment of the liability law, Bebel brought forward the idea that along with the extension of the liability there should be introduced by the state the obligation of insurance on the part of all employers. He expressed the opinion, that for the state to establish and manage a general insurance fund to which all employers must contribute, would not really present any serious difficulty. The state could apply the principle that it must divide the various businesses and industries into different classes and categories, according to their danger for the life and health of the working class. Bebel weighed coolly the

bill introduced by the government. It provided for the concentration of accident insurance into one single establishment in the national insurance bureau, and for a national contribution to the same, and overlooked the organization of insurance according to crafts and vocations.

Liebknecht on the other hand greeted heartily the principle upon which accident insurance was constructed. He expressed himself in the following sense: "The conditions of labor have developed so tremendously in modern times, that private individuals or private institutions can no longer control the functions of labor on a large scale. Accordingly, the state, that is, the whole of society, must lay hold of the functions of labor as a whole upon which the common life rests, if disaster is not to arise for the state and society, if the atomic falling apart of everything is to be avoided, and especially if the state itself is to be maintained."

The Social-Democracy, according to Liebknecht, does not shrink in any way "before the objection which is made against us from the Left, that when in this matter we advocate state insurance, we are allowing an all too great power to the state. We know, however, that the present state does not represent those ideals which we hold concerning the state. This law as it lies before us, is in itself rather insignificant. You fear it on account of what it involves. It is just the thin end of the wedge which will be driven into bourgeois society. The thick end will follow it, whether Prince Bismarck wishes it or not. The conditions are stronger than he.

"You are entirely right from the point of view

of your class interests in fearing this law. It will lead to other things. Prince Bismarck has already indicated that himself. In so far as the state assumes insurance against accidents in the industries, it puts itself in a position where it must assume control over industries." According to Liebknecht, that is absolutely necessary. "If Prince Bismarck did not intend these consequences, this law is a miserable farce, worse than the most vicious election manoeuvres, and I cannot believe that of Prince Bismarck. His attitude, his interests, guarantee that he is in earnest in this matter. He must take this position. Now Honorable Sirs, it is granted that the control of the entire conditions of labor are involved in this law. Prince Bismarck has already gone further, and has said, "Indeed if it has come to a pass where the great industries cannot compete any more, that individual factories of private owners can no longer be carried on, then the state must step in." Very well, gentlemen, Prince Bismarck may proceed toward our goal—on this route we march together, but we do not hang onto *his* coat-tails. It is of value to all parties, without exception, that labor legislation should be taken up in an earnest fashion. The fear of the consequences will not hold you back from taking the first step in this matter. You still have the ground under your feet.

"The ghost of Russian nihilism has been invoked previously. Gentlemen, mere repression without organization, without organic action, without positive measures, must necessarily compel the most complete disorganization of society, and drive the state into nihilistic con-

ditions. Socialism alone will save you from nihilism. Without Socialism you are indeed no longer in a position to maintain the present state. We gather around the poor man, because we need him. But if we did not take our place upon the basis of Socialism, it is entirely possible that the "poor man" will be a corpse before we get that far. It is necessary to make provisions for the "poor", for the "little" man, while he is still alive. Now, in this law, you can show whether it is your intent to do something for the people. The introduction of this law is a proof, that whatever the motives may be, it has been found even in the highest station, that matters cannot go farther as they are. Here is the opportunity to come forward with positive measures. Now it is still possible to prevent the catastrophes, which if the thing is allowed to develop further, will become unavoidable. Now it is still possible to prepare the way for the solution of the social question upon the path of social reform. The words "reform" and "revolution" have very often been set over against each other in this house, and outside of it, as being in opposition. And we all want to prevent revolution. Now this "laisser faire, laisser aller"—whether it is realized by the jailer state or by the night-watchman state, if it gives to the worker only an empty political freedom, or if without concerning itself with his freedom it simply holds him in quiet and order with a club—such a "letting go" will lead straight to revolution.

"You can only avoid the danger of revolution when legislation—not a christian, but an actual-

ly humane, a cultural legislation, sustained by the spirit of Socialism—regulates the conditions of labor and of the laborer, takes in hand earnestly and energetically the solution of the labor question, and when it leads the state to fulfill its proper mission.

"Briefly, you can only avoid the revolution when you travel the pathway of thorough-going reform. Adopt the law, with those amendments which we have proposed to free it from its inherent deficiencies, and you will really have taken a very significant step on the pathway of reform. You will not thereby have taken the ground out from under the Social-Democracy, but will have done it a service: for this law is but a proof of the truth of the Socialist idea."

In the following years the Social-Democracy voted against the labor insurance laws in the Reichstag. The illiberal organization of the labor insurance, the extreme smallness of the sickness, accident and invalid benefits, the method of collecting the premiums for the insurance, made it impossible for them to give their voice in approval of this form of labor insurance. They do not reject the principle of labor insurance. On the contrary they promise it their support, since they demand a real, effective, and very thorough-going provision for labor insurance. Their unwearied efforts to improve labor insurance in the interests of the workers, aimed at this goal.

It is not the purpose of this little essay to write a history of all the strong-minded and tenacious efforts of the Social-Democracy towards the transformation of administration bills

in a spirit friendly to the working class. That would compose a thickly bound history of the Social-Democratic Reichstag fraction. This pamphlet must limit itself to a sketching of the Social-Democratic attitude towards the various legislative propositions.

The fundamental idea of state labor insurance received the undivided sympathy of the Social-Democracy, but the insufficient carrying out of this idea hindered the party for a long while from giving its vote for the administration bills. In the year 1899 there came a crisis in the tactics of the Social-Democracy regarding labor insurance. In this year they voted for the law for invalid insurance. The bills brought in had made no improvement in the faulty foundations of this legislation. This change in the tactics of the Social-Democracy startled the political ranks, even far among the bourgeois parties. In the *Frankfurter Zeitung* Dr. Jastrow expressed his great astonishment at the approving vote of the party having been given for the invalid insurance law.

At the Breslau party convention in the year 1895, Bebel held that it was not possible for the Social-Democracy to raise its hand, except for a labor insurance bill which should bring about a fundamental change of insurance legislation and a unifying of the insurance institutions. In 1899 and 1900 the party declared itself in favor of bills connected with this legislation which only touched the surfaces of the existing legislative conditions and smoothed off a few edges and inequalities of the same. At the Breslau convention in 1895 Bebel said: "We have often been

put in the position before now, and will again be put into the same position, where, although apparently one of our demands is to be realized, we must vote against a proposition, because the manner of carrying it out does not meet with our approval. For instance, we all want to have a unifying of the insurance for sickness, accidents, and invalids; but when the national government finally comes in with the bill, I will wager 100 against 1 that we will vote against it, because we do not agree with the method of carrying it out."

Sharp discussion in the Social-Democratic fraction brought about openly this change of the party tactics with reference to labor insurance. We will present here only two items of weighty overpowering evidence.

At the Dresden party convention in 1903, Bebel said. "We fought bitterly in connection with the last proposed bill on labor insurance. The blows fell like hail in all directions, and finally the adoption of the law by the fraction was decided by a vote of 14 to 13."

Molkenbuhr made the following attack against Bebel's presentation of the case: "Bebel has made a mistake in saying that the Social-Democratic fraction has adopted the new tactics—not to reject the law referred to—only with a vote of 13 against 14. The vote within the fraction on this question arose in connection with the invalid insurance law. It was decided by a great majority to vote for the invalid insurance law, so that there can be no talk of an accidental majority."

And now it must be sufficient for us to say, on the basis of the unobjectionable evidence of delegate Molkenbuhr, that in that act a change

*Change to  
accepting small  
reforms*

took place in the tactics of the Social-Democracy, with reference to German labor insurance.

#### 4. LABOR LEGISLATION AND THE SOCIAL-DEMOCRACY.

Since it is the history of the changes in the fundamental ideas of the Social-Democracy of which we are writing, we pass lightly over the subject of "Labor Legislation and the Social-Democracy".

What significance can be given to the fact that in the many-thousand-voiced chorus of the Social-Democracy in favor of labor legislation, two thin piping voices are heard against this legislation? There appeared, long, long years ago, in the "Democratischen Wochenblatt" of the Liebknecht wing, the following expression: "The followers of Schweitzer have delivered the workers by their labor legislation into the hands of Bismarck." Aug. Kapell at the Gotha Congress opposed the elaboration of a Social-Democratic labor legislation proposal with the argument: "Our program is our labor legislation. We cannot ask any such palliatives of the present state." Since the hour of its birth the Social-Democracy has been conscious of its social obligations to the working class, namely, to bring into being a great and effective labor legislation.

Schippel says rightly in his *Social-Democratic Reichstag Handbook*, "The unwearied activity of the Social-Democracy in the field of labor legislation constitutes one of the first pages of honor in the history of the Social-Democratic Reichstag fraction. Even in the first session of the North German Reichstag, Von Schweitzer strove to

bring forward a labor law, elaborated by him. But alas! in vain. In the Reichstag session of the North German Federation of the 17th of March, 1869, Von Schweitzer showed, by means of a train of thought employed in Marx's "Capital", the exploitation of the present worker by capitalism, and moved, for the protection of the exploited class, the introduction of thorough-going labor legislation."

In general, a comparative unanimity rules in the ranks of the Social-Democratic party, concerning the importance of labor legislation on grounds of principle, for the transformation of the capitalistic economic order.

No less a person than Karl Marx has imputed to this class of legislation a fundamental value in connection with the progress of the working class, the progress of a new economic order. According to Marx, the heated battle concerning the English ten-hour bill centred around a world-moving controversy, proposing interference with the standard of the law concerning supply and demand which the political economy of the middle class had created, and *proposing that social production be regulated by social care, which is the substance of the political economy of the working class.* The ten-hour bill, therefore, was not only a great practical success, it was a victory of a principle. For the first time the political economy of the middle class succumbed to the political economy of the working class. Marx discerned in the English ten-hour bill a victory for the principle of the *control of social production by social insight and foresight.*

A fundamental Social-Democratic idea permeated the labor bills which even at the beginning of Social-Democratic activity were introduced by delegates Von Schweitzer, Hasenclever and Fritzsche (1869). In the introduction to the proposed labor legislation, they declared directly that they would only present such propositions as they thought would promote the following ideas:

"1. In case the principle of economic freedom does not appear (within the capitalist movement), there should be accomplished at least a removal in outline of the exorbitant aggravations connected with the sale of labor power; 2. a removal in outline of the aggravated injuries to the working class; 3. the promotion of the power of resistance and the power of attack for the working class against the capitalist class."

"The points of view, which all reduce themselves to the common point of view—*to promote the economic development especially in the direction of socialism*—underlie the above-mentioned proposals, and coming forward more definitely in the future, will underlie proposals for future legislative titles. As a fundamental principle of Socialism, however, we will briefly indicate this idea: that just as the state and social conditions of the Middle Ages were determined by the element of landed property, and just as the modern conditions are determined by the element of movable capital, so in the future all conditions shall be determined by the element of labor."

We said before, however, and rightly, that a considerable unity rules in the Social-Democracy concerning the valuation of labor legislation as a

means of transforming the capitalistic economic order.

Rosa Luxemburg and her group of followers would protest violently if we should ascribe any such opinions concerning labor legislation to them. Rosa Luxemburg scoffed at the designation of the factory law as a portion of "social control". Social control, the protection of the workers, the oversight of stock companies, etc., does not act as a limitation of capitalistic property, but as a protection for it. She said once, "And if Bernstein should ask the question, whether in factory legislation there is much or little socialism involved, we can assure him that in the very best factory law there is just exactly so much socialism involved as there is in the official decisions concerning the cleaning of streets or the lighting of gas lamps—which is also "social control".

However highly one may value the importance of labor legislation, on the ground of principle, for the reconstruction of the capitalistic social order, there may still be considerable dispute over the extent to which the principle of labor legislation can really develop in the capitalist society. Bebel said once that the best measures in the field of labor legislation have only a temporary value, and constitute only "the music between acts, which fills out the pauses between the battle of the old and passing world of the bourgeoisie and the new and growing world of the proletariat."

Points of view in the Social-Democratic party concerning the field which labor legislation may include in its practical activity depend upon the opinions which the various Social-Democratic

wings have formed: first, with reference to the slow or rapid development of capitalism into socialism; second, concerning the possibility of the working class wresting labor legislation from the bourgeois within capitalist society; third, concerning the role which labor legislation can undertake alongside of other means of transforming capitalism.

At Erfurt in 1891, Bebel portrayed the collapse of capitalist society as near at hand, and accordingly he very consistently from this point of view estimated the value of labor legislation as being very small. Labor legislation indeed could prove to be but little more than a bath for the bodily regeneration and renewing of the working class when socialism was already audibly knocking at the doors of the existing society. The opinion has repeatedly been advanced in the party, that the efforts of the Social-Democracy for labor legislation within the capitalistic state and social order, are confined to the narrowest conceivable limits.

Vollmar, in opposition to Bebel, conceived the Social-Democracy to be still separated by a considerable distance from its goal. He formed, accordingly, a very high conception of the power of labor legislation, in its effect for the renewing of the working class power. He further regarded the labor movement as a factor of increasing power which constantly wrested ever greater concessions from the present state. Accordingly, he labored for the further development of the labor movement as a factor of political power, "since all politics is essentially a question of power and only those can hope to achieve any-

thing who can support their demands by real force."

A rather too vigorous promotion of labor legislation might be opposed under some conditions by the Social-Democratic wing, since by that all other portions of the program might be overshadowed. According to the opinion of the Social-Democratic theorizers, the labor legislation in England stifled directly the fundamental political and social demands of the proletariat. In an essay on "The Party Convention and State Socialism", Kautsky discussed thoroughly the methods proposed by the opposition for the purpose of leading the class struggle of the proletariat into a channel which should be free from danger for them. He included also in these methods, the English legislation by the state for the protection of the workers. He charged against this legislation that it has estranged the progressive portion of the working class entirely from a revolutionary policy. By the aid of labor legislation, the gradual introduction of the normal labor day, etc., the English bourgeoisie according to Kautsky, understood how to divide the working class into a favored portion—which should have an interest in the existing regime, and a neglected class—which indeed would have every reason for a revolutionary policy, but no power.

If we are to fight against state socialism, we must also fight against those measures peculiar to it, by which it aims to reach its goal. Though we, on the other hand, fight the attitude of the anglicising liberal social-policy, this does not

hold for the measures which they propose. On the contrary, we must demand most of these. They constitute the indispensable means for the class struggle, the indispensable lever for the gradual elevation and emancipation of the proletariat. But we dare not cease at the same time to use criticism and to destroy the illusions which link themselves with the social reform, to which some would very gladly convert the worker.

According to Kautsky, one must constantly destroy the illusions which link themselves to that system. We must not cease to use every means, so that the proletarians may not concentrate their entire attention upon the immediate practical tasks, so that they may remain conscious of their great historical mission. And so the danger threatens, that by some turn of the liberal social policy which Kautsky attacks, the masses of the workers may become estranged from their great revolutionary goal.

Kautsky nevertheless holds labor legislation to be indispensable for the militant proletariat. He regarded the eight-hour day (in his May-day article) as the next practical aim of the labor movement. What the ten-hour day was for England previously, that the eight-hour day is now for all industrial states, in his opinion. It is now no longer a concern for one single nation, but of the entire civilized humanity. It is no longer a matter of guarding one series of workers against entire demoralization. The problem is, by regeneration of the working classes, to enable these to assume their proper place in society, and

to work for their transformation according to modern requirements.

It is not a part of our task to criticise the ideas here developed concerning the value of labor legislation for the emancipation battle of the proletariat. We must content ourselves with the task of a simple reporter.

The points of view concerning labor legislation may differ widely in the Social-Democracy and have done so in the past. Those Social-Democrats who already see the morning light of the socialistic era flaming red in the sky, can only subscribe to a minimum of social-political significance for labor legislation. The Social-Democratic wing which conceives the social-political sphere of the working class to be very closely limited through the conditions of political power established by the bourgeoisie, must also, at least secretly, agree to this valuation of labor legislation. The regenerating influence of labor legislation upon the working class, again, must weigh as lightly as a feather in the scales of those Social-Democrats who believe in an unregulated gigantic growth of the reserve army of labor—thanks to the development of the factory machines. Just this very factor in the deterioration of the conditions of the working class, can under certain circumstances entirely defeat wholesome labor legislation for improving the sanitary conditions of the masses. On the other hand, the Social-Democratic wing which accepts an increasing regulation of the entire conditions of labor through a state influenced by the proletariat, must form an entirely different judgment of labor legislation.

We must content ourselves here with the disclosing of the sources of the various Social-Democratic opinions concerning the significance of labor legislation for principles and tactics.

*consistent anti-militarism*

## CHAPTER III.

### MILITARISM AND THE SOCIAL-DEMOCRACY.

Has the Social-Democracy experienced any changes in its fundamentally negative attitude over against the existing militarism?

Since the first days of its vigorously joyful existence, until its fully endowed maturity, there sounds through all its party declarations the rough and revolutionary word: "For this military system not a man and not a penny."

And yet now and then softer tones seem to mingle in the hard revolutionary speech. Social-Democrats have repeatedly had to answer before the party convention because their speeches or publications appeared to do away with the fundamental bitterness against the present military system. Judgments have been given in such phrases as "cannon against the people's rights". The loyalty of a Patriarch of the German Social-Democracy to the principle of the arming of the whole people was seriously called in question.

We will not enter here into the stormy and passionate personal discussions which were connected with these expressions and publications. The essential kernel of these discussions consists in the reproof against the practice of making concessions to militarism and to the incorrigible military system. In the background of all these debates concerning militarism stands the funda-

mental conviction of great masses of the Social-Democratic following, that militarism cannot be reformed, that it must be removed. The advocacy of military reform ideas, therefore, was taken to indicate a feeble concession to the principle of militarism.

*The reform, or the destruction of Militarism?* This question thrusts itself upon us at once in the discussion of the present military system. Can militarism be subjected to a thorough-going transformation, a reform of body and members, within the present social system? Here again, in the theoretic battle of opinions, the discussion begins concerning the limits which are set within the present society to a deeply rooted reform.

Once more the fundamental question of the entire Marxian evolutionary teaching arises: Does the social order perish of itself? Does militarism kill itself by its own logical development, or is it to be gradually transformed in its character by the legal, systematic interference of the masses?

According to the theories of Marx and Engels, militarism digs its own grave. The main activity of the revolutionary socialistic propaganda must accordingly expend itself in the introduction of the masses to the evolutionary tendencies of militarism, and in enlightening them concerning the expression of the will of the masses—the mass action—made possible in that evolution. The positive interference of the masses in military affairs, in the presence of the outward evolutionary tendencies of militarism shrinks to a mere labor of enlightenment and an actual revolutionary deed. In this spirit Frederick

Engels expressed himself in his article: "Herr Eugene Duehring's Transformation of Science", as follows: "The army exists for its own ends; the people are there only to furnish soldiers and the commissariat. Militarism rules and devours Europe. But this militarism carries within itself the germs of its own fall. The competition of the individual states among themselves compels them on the one hand to spend more money every year for army, fleet, weapons, etc., and so to hasten more and more the financial collapse; and on the other hand, to put more earnestly the universal obligation of military service, and thereby to familiarise the entire people more and more with the use of weapons, thus enabling them at a given moment to enforce their wills over against the commanding military rule. And this moment will arrive so soon as the people—country and city workers and farmers—have one will. At this point the army of the prince is transformed into a people's army, the machine refuses to render service, and militarism goes down according to the logic of its own evolution. That which the bourgeois democracy of 1848 could not accomplish, just because it was bourgeois i. e., to give the working class a will, the content of which should correspond to the conditions of its class, this socialism will infallibly accomplish. And that means the collapse from within of militarism and with it of all standing armies."

The growth of the intolerable burdens which militarism piles upon the shoulders of our people, and the transformation of the entire nation into uniformed soldiery—just these two movements tend to overthrow the present military system.

And shall we by reforms, by financial economies, by reduction of the peace footing, etc., modify the gallop of militarism to its own overthrow? Let militarism, a second wild hunter, ride to its own destruction. "Let him dash, let him dash down to hell." One must be content with having discovered the trail of the evolutionary tendencies of militarism, and work with these tendencies as far as may be, but not interfere with it by reforms.

Some such ideas must suggest themselves to an orthodox Marxian.

In the dialectical evolutionary ideas of Marx and Engels there is often a hard rejection of all thoughts of reform. The conscious interference of men plays a pygmy part beside the weighty compulsion of the objective evolutionary tendencies inhering in the phenomena. Yet Engels repeatedly limited this fundamental conception in his writings. According to his work, "Can Europe disarm?"—the initiative of the people can rise to great effective deeds just in the field of military reform. Systematic and gradual international reform can accomplish the gigantic labor of a transformation of militarism into a popular militia. In this article Engels proceeds upon the presupposition, that the system of the standing armies has been driven to the extreme in all Europe to such an extent that it must either ruin the people economically through the military burdens, or degenerate into a universal battle of destruction, unless the standing armies should be at the proper time transformed into a militia based upon a universal arming of the people. Accordingly, Engels seeks to furnish the proof

that this transformation is now possible, even for the present governments and in the present political conditions. He proceeds from this position, and proposes meanwhile only such means as the present governments could adopt without endangering the national safety. Engels further refers to the fact, that the revolutionary side of the Prussian military system consists in the demand that the powers of every ablebodied man be placed at the service of the national defense. And the only revolutionary fact which can be discovered in the entire military development since 1870, lies just in this, that it has been necessary—often against the will—more and more to carry out this demand, hitherto realized only in “jingo” dreams.

No change can be made to-day, either in the terms of service or in the enlistment of all youth capable of bearing arms. Least of all can such change be made by the Social-Democratic party, which on the other hand is the only party in Germany in a position to translate this demand into action.

Engels then moved: “An international agreement among the great powers, on a maximum time of service under the flag for all classes of weapons, at first for two years, but with the proviso of an immediate further reduction as soon as the possibility appears, and with the popular militia system as the goal.”

The substance of the proposition then is, that the international two years service time shall only be the first step toward the gradual further reduction of the time of service—say first for eighteen months, two summers and one winter—

then one year—and then? "Here begins the future state, the unadulterated popular militia system. And then we can speak further when the plan is actually in process."

The pamphlet of the great Social-Democratic expert in military matters sums the matter up finally in the idea, that the present militarism can be transformed into the popular militia system by international military reform. And even in the bitterly reproachful speech of Bebel against militarism there glows frequently a passionate zeal to transform the existing army into a great democratic institution. The reform of militarism was, as it seems to us, the keynote of his oft-quoted budget speech of June 25, 1890. In this speech Bebel declared himself to be in agreement with the basic idea of the administration plan, as this had been developed in the full session and in the military commission. But this plan was based upon the universal obligation to military service. Bebel was willing to provide as carefully as did the administration, that every able-bodied man should be in a position in a case of necessity to protect his fatherland against the foreign foe.

In the realization of this plan he differed entirely from the points of view of the gentlemen of the administration. Bebel regarded as impossible the carrying out of the administration plan for a three years' service time.

"It is indeed possible to realize such a plan fully and entirely, and according to my conviction for the most ample safety of Germany, if we reduce the time of military service to that standard upon which it already exists for a not insignificant portion of those belonging to the

German nation. I have now especially in mind the institution of the one-year volunteers."

Bebel is convinced that the one year term of military training is fully sufficient, a conviction which is based upon an existing arrangement, and which cannot be at all denied or opposed. Upon these grounds we demand in the first place that it be universally carried out. Thus Germany, which stands in a peculiar relation to its neighbors, will be in condition "to one day protect the native land with the military levy of all its forces."

Bebel insisted especially upon doing away with the drill. If this could disappear altogether, with the time-robbing parade, one year would surely be enough to fully accomplish what we hold to be necessary in case of defense of the fatherland.

Especial care should be taken, in Bebel's opinion, that every one may serve the flag gladly. And therefore the treatment must be better throughout. The conviction has been awakened among the people that a soldier is not treated as a human being, on account of which the joy of military service vanishes more and more. In the Middle Ages it was a position of the highest honor and the sign of a free man, to be able to bear arms. To-day it is the custom to escape from this service of honor as much as possible, because the entire system is so degenerate that there is no longer any trace of human freedom and the entire system leads to the suppression of every independent impulse. It is very necessary in this field that some changes be brought about. The administration ought above all things to increase and to strengthen

the feeling of self-reliance in the army, and then it would come to be an entirely different army from the present one.

But again, according to Bebel, on grounds of economy and good military tactics, this army should be clad in dark colors. "Everybody knows, that in case we should be compelled to carry on war, all these bright and often shrieking colors of the uniforms, the glancing steels and shining brass must be put out of sight as quickly as possible, since all of it involves the greatest danger to the life of the individual man. It is the more necessary to proceed with reform in this matter, in view of the form which the technic of fire-arms has assumed." For this purpose Bebel declared himself to be willing to approve a loan, because he was convinced that a more profitable expenditure could not be made. "Once accomplished, it would make possible for us very considerable economies in later time in connection with the regular expenditures of uniforms; and it would especially shield and save the lives of our soldiers to a considerable degree in case of war."

The proposition of Dr. Davids at the Stuttgart party convention, for the introduction of the one-year term of service, falls into the class of the Bebel military propositions. Dr. Davids did not offer to withdraw his motion, because it was not a popular militia proposition. The demand for the popular militia system is still very little understood abroad: one must first take hold of the present militarism and the popular militia will follow later on. The Davids motion was re-

commended to the fraction as material for reference.

A Bavarian assembly hand-book of the Social-Democracy also spoke in favor of military reform. It showed that the Social-Democracy desired another organization of the army, by which protection should be assured in the same degree —yes, even greater—without burdening the people as is now done. The Social-Democracy therefore, demands the transformation of the present “barracks army” into a “popular army” which is to be approached by a gradual, essential reduction of the term of service.

In connection with the question of the reform of militarism, the inexorable mandate of the iron-hearted Cato, “Carthage must be destroyed”, has not always hovered upon our lips. Only a few months ago, Karl Kautsky in his article “To the Party Convention” placed the reduction of the term of service upon the program of action of the German Social-Democracy. Taken with its fundamental attitude upon the matter of the people’s militia, this is not opposed to a reform of the present militarism.

## CHAPTER IV.

### MUNICIPAL SOCIAL-REFORM AND THE SOCIAL-DEMOCRACY.

It is only little by little that the great and peculiar field of activity in the local community has dawned upon the vision of the Social-Democrats.

The municipality, with its large social-political functions, fell entirely outside the range of the thinking of Lassalle and his followers. Even to-day there still exists in the minds of orthodox Lassalleans a rigid state-socialism. According to their ideas the state swallowed up all the economic and political functions of society. Accordingly they conceived the socialization of the means of production entirely in the form of universal state ownership.

In the course of economic development the community encroached upon numerous fields of private activity, incorporating these into itself and so enlarging its functions considerably. The gas and water service, sanitary affairs, dwelling houses, traffic—all of these gigantic branches of private business—have scattered social and economic mischief in such abundance throughout the common life, that the community must find a way to interfere in these branches of private business for good or for ill.

The social-economic character of the commun-

ity was changed. The community, with its peculiar social tasks, forced itself gradually upon the leading minds of the Social-Democracy. They sought to weave the community into their social-political program. A lively change of ideas set in among the Social-Democracy, over the functions which the community had to fulfill in the interests of the socialistic transformation of society. Since the nineties of the last century various municipal-political programs have sprung up in all parts of Germany.

A heated struggle over a completed municipal-political system kindled in the Social-Democracy. The party wished to introduce a unity of principles into the jumble of its previous municipal-political platforms.

To-day the municipal-socialistic movement surges in great waves in all the large communities of Germany. The Social-Democracy has secured, in the "Municipal Practice" (Kommunale Praxis) of representative Dr. Suedekum, an organ of their own for the systematic spread and deepening of its municipal-social policy.

But this strong municipal-socialistic movement now ruling must not lead us to forget what opposition it had to overcome originally in the Social-Democracy. On the one side there arose the rigid Lassallean state-socialism, which could see all help coming only from the state, and which reckoned only with the state-power as the proper creative force for transforming society. On the other hand there appeared a revolutionary radicalism, which expected a social change in the municipality only through a political and economic revolution, and wished to see the entire

activity of the Social-Democracy within the state and community reduced to an educational revolutionary socialistic propaganda. This latter propaganda was pitched in the following key: Under the rule of a class state the workers can gain no decisive influence upon the community and accordingly, they should only aim to bring about a mass movement based upon socialistic principles.

Let us here estimate briefly a characteristic demonstration of this radical anti-municipal movement.

In 1883 the Berlin Social-Democratic working-men approached the municipal election with "divided feeling". At the Dresden party convention Von Vollmar referred to a resolution of the Berlin Social-Democrats of Berlin in 1884, refusing to take part in the election, which was based upon the following grounds: The participation in class elections is contrary to the program, and in no way promotes the development of the labor party; it promotes much rather the infection of the office-hunting spirit, which results in corruption.

In 1887 there appeared in the "Berliner Volks-tribune" of Nov. 12th, an energetic protest against the municipal elections. The majority of the committee entrusted with the direction of the Reichstag election in February, 1887 had decided for a complete withholding from the election. The committee intended thereby to manifest "the bitterest protest against a system which sentences us to complete deprivation of political rights." Their proclamation concluded with the words: "The Berlin

*Changes to  
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1888 municipal Socialism*

## CHANGES IN TACTICS

workingmen have had the courage to take up every real election struggle with their opponents, and will have the courage again; but they are not so dishonest politically as to take part in a political farce."

Early in 1888 there appeared in the "Berliner Volkstribune" an opinion concerning the municipal elections, by Max Schippel. In this opinion the following principles and ideas were laid down: "Do we vote in order most of all to gain a joint influence upon the bourgeois legislation and administration? Or do we vote especially for the purpose of educating the masses through the agitation before the election and the conduct of our representatives after the election, to enlighten the people as to their own interests and bring them into opposition to the bourgeois tendencies?"

The answer to this is already "given unequivocally by the entire previous attitude of our party. If the municipal elections exist for us, first of all, to put through certain modest demands—and under the limited range of power in the Prussian municipalities our demands could never be more than modest—then it is indeed a mistake to put up independent candidates. In that case it would be much more effective to promise our votes to such bourgeois candidates as would pledge themselves to work energetically for industrial arbitration courts, school baths, sanitary stations, and other conveniences. Then we could oblige them to fulfill their promises by threatening, in case of failure, to support their opponents. Whatever is practically within our reach in the way of "positive" successes could be

accomplished much more quickly and easily by this method. And if our bourgeois candidates could not declare themselves in agreement with many of our demands—why, these would be most of all those demands which we could never carry out so long as the present conditions exist—since under the three-class voting system we must always remain a petty minority. This means, accordingly, that we should be concerned with demands which could never find adoption in our municipal program, unless—only unless—we should look entirely for so-called practical success. Then, logically, we could only name such demands as the authoritative bourgeois majority would be able to grant; and in that case, as has been said, it would be much simpler and more effective to give our votes to bourgeois candidates, and in return to pledge them to our demands. It is not necessary, it seems to us, even to criticise this point of view in the first place: it is settled by the presenting of its consequences."

"And so the second point of view remains the only right and authoritative one: *We vote in order to win the masses for socialistic ideas, in order to enlighten them in regard to socialism.* And the question: Shall we participate in the municipal elections? carries with it accordingly the other question: Is the municipal election movement in Berlin, and the activity in the City Hall, calculated to promote the socialistic propaganda among the workingmen? And to that we answer; No! And therefore we are opposed to taking part in the municipal elections, as they are constituted in Berlin. We would be in favor of participating in these elections, if they could

serve to promote really socialistic aims. We are opponents of municipal elections, principally because we have no municipal socialist program. Because, that which presents itself as such today, cannot lay claim to the designation "socialistic" in a single point."

According to Schippel's meaning, the purely humanitarian demands of the Social-Democratic program, the improvement of city sanitary conditions, etc., have no socialistic character in themselves. Sanitary stations, cold baths for our dear school children—can of course do no harm. On all these points there is a general unanimity—"as far as the German tongue sounds, as well among the propertied as among the propertiless. But just on that account there are reformers who want nothing to do with a movement which brings the class struggle to the consciousness of the people—that is, they want nothing to do with socialism."

Again, Social-Democrats set themselves in contradiction to their principles, according to Schippel, when they try to reform the care for the poor in the community, since hitherto they have rejected on principle the system of poor-relief, which degrades the worker to a begging recipient of alms.

And then Schippel, in his "opinion", energetically opposed the municipalization of the means of transportation. "We have just as little ground as a reactionary state government would have to present—as it were upon a tray—a new object of exploitation to liberal municipal administrations. We can thereby only fill dishes from which we may not—and under the three-class system never

will—eat our share. Others may enthuse over this: we are not in a position to do so! The question as to how far a couple of labor representatives—‘Social-Democratic’ councilmen one can hardly call them, as has been said—can use their influence to raise wages, is doubtless of great interest. And since the most remarkable points of view sometimes arise in this connection, we will reserve this question for a separate article. But a capitalist club, such as the city council must be and must remain under the three-class system, will never raise the level of wages of city employees above the general average.”

Schippel then illustrated the value of the administrative schooling of the laborer through his activity as an alderman. “We will not go farther than to refer to the fact that just where the real administrative activity in the municipality begins, i. e., in the election for the various branches of the administration, our representatives are shut out. This may possibly change, especially if we behave ourselves! But it must seem most astonishing, that a party which has brought forward almost 100,000 votes in Berlin at the Reichstag election, and so includes double that many adults, should be so eager to acquire five, or possibly ten ‘public administrative positions’. What are ten among so many? And have we not a plenty of administrative schools in our special societies with their appendages of wage-commissions and labor bureaus, in our sick benefits, and societies, culture associations, and special schools? And these organizations in addition have the unspeakable benefit that the laborer here associates with laborers, that he is

not ensnared upon the slippery parquet of the bourgeois halls of state, where the unaccustomed surroundings may very easily delude him, draw him away from his comrades, and open up to him other spheres of thought. There are enough examples of the latter—and not only in Berlin."

"And here we come to a difference between the friends and the opponents of participation in elections, a difference which rests upon that which is the basis of still many other oppositions within our party, upon a difference which finally is a gradual one, but which is nevertheless everywhere rising noticeably into importance".

"One portion of our party, more than the other, casts expectant eyes towards those legislative and administrative organizations (parliaments, city councils), which the bourgeoisie has erected in order to express and realize its changing interests and wishes. This portion very easily ascribes an exaggerated value to the breaking into these bourgeois organizations with Social-Democratic members, in order to accomplish—as it were from the top downward—great agitational and positive successes for the party. The opposing group does not deny the successes, but it ascribes a relatively greater value to the direct agitation among the masses, the organization of unions, the immediate spreading of ideas by word and writing, from laborer to laborer, without the intervention of any medium of an entirely different sort. They say, for instance, in case of the activity as alderman (a moment of the right of free assembly being presupposed): we have five representatives; these devoted formerly surely at least an average

of an entire afternoon every week to their office, yet without any great opportunity for effective activity in the transaction of the entire business in the City Hall. If every one of these five representatives had used that afternoon for the preparation of a political address, to be delivered that evening in some public meeting, what immeasurable enlightenment might thus have been accomplished—and what has been accomplished? Or, if after the removal of the right of free assembly, each of the five representatives had every week devoted half a day more directly to the party, would not the time have been better used? Here the opinions divide—."

In the end of the eighties several plots exploded, which had been laid against participation in municipal elections. In the beginning of the nineties, only the "Independent Socialists" stormed in the "Socialist" against participation in municipal elections.

## CHAPTER V.

### TRADES UNIONS AND THE SOCIAL-DEMOCRACY.

Is the transformation of the capitalist economy entirely a work of the state? In the social-political program of Ferdinand Lassalle, for instance, no place is found for the peculiar social-economic tasks of the municipality, the trades unions and the co-operative societies. "State-help" crystallizes in the program of the Lassalleans into one single and immovable article of faith, and the disciples of Lassalle pursued, almost with a blind hate of fanaticism, all social-political efforts based upon self-help.

The habits of thought of the Lassalleans, concerning trades union and co-operative affairs, affect us to-day like ideas from a distant planet. And rightly so, for a complete change has taken place in the conception of the Social-Democracy relative to the trades union and co-operative movements since the days of Lassalle and his orthodox followers.

Even in the year 1874, according to the resolution of the Universal German Labor Society, the promoters of the trades union movement were to be branded with the mark of Judas, unless they would take oath absolutely upon the idea of state-help, and thereby imperil the radical social-political efforts of the society. The general assembly declared among other things that all

corporate societies of Germany, "which claim to promote the protection of the laborer against the measureless oppression of the power of capital", are entirely unfitted to accomplish this purpose. The unequal battle waged against the might of capital by the corporate societies which have for their entire basis the impossible "self-help" of the laborers, endangers not only the resisting power of the laborers, but also in the highest degree the radical social-political efforts of the Universal German Labor Society.

The general assembly therefore declared all those to be traitors to the working class who—mainly out of selfish motives—continue to force the trades unions into the foreground of the labor movement, contrary to the resolutions of the Universal German Labor Society at Berlin in 1872, and at Frankfurt on the Main in 1873, thus damaging in inexcusable fashion the agitation of the Universal German Labor Society. The general assembly expressed the wish that all trades union alliances existing within our party should be dissolved as soon as possible, and that the members be transferred to the Universal German Labor Society. It should then be the duty of the members of the Universal German Labor Society to work with this aim. A further extension of the strike-fund, being a "disturbance of the centralization of the workers, is not practical." Moreover all corporate societies, whose members claim to espouse the teaching of Lassalle, should dissolve within a year, and so far as possible transfer their members to the Universal German Labor Society. "Members, officers

and managers of corporate societies, who are members of the Universal German Labor Society and yet do not render obedience to this decree, shall after the lapse of a year be regarded as expelled from the Universal German Labor Society without further action."

Lassalleans like Von Schweitzer and Fritz-sche, at the end of the sixties (of the last century) had fought their way through to their own independent conception of the trades union situation. Still Von Schweitzer by no means regarded the trades union movement as a branch of the universal labor movement, having equal privileges with the political movement. He saw in it most of all a lever with which to invest the political movement with a stronger energy.

Do the trades unions exist only to strengthen the political labor movement, or do they fulfill a peculiar task arising from their economic task? These questions must have drilled their way ever deeper into the minds of working men. Economic and social transformations were taking place every year before the very eyes of the working men. These transformations passed over the rigid form of the state without leaving a trace. New economic and social conditions of power established themselves. But the state appeared to be frozen. Other powers than the purely political, great economic potencies, accomplished actual social works of wonder. And these forces drew the workers together into the factories and gave them a natural organization. The growing signs of life of these organizations drew the managements into sympathy.

They came to a standstill. Gradually the conception dawned upon the labor organizations that they embodied a certain power, which under given conditions could influence the business managements. The labor organizations created new foundations for themselves and proceeded consciously and systematically. The trades unions came into existence. Is not this the rising of a new world, the world of the organized producers, the creators of social wealth? Is not this growth a part of the economic organization of the future? These and similar questions thronged upon the working men. Large groups of workers came to the conviction that in the process of transforming society the trades unions have a prominent part to play.

The Eisenachers, the Bebel-Liebknecht wing, first clearly grasped the peculiar independent economic tasks of the trades unions. They assigned to the trades unions, among other things, the important mission of an economic organizing force, since they must prepare beforehand the productive co-operative societies. Said York, at the Stuttgart Labor Party Congress in 1870: "It is the high task of the co-operatives (the craft co-operatives) not only to insure the workers against accidents and to gain higher wages for them, but to advance them, to organize and prepare them beforehand for the producing co-operatives...."

"The co-operatives had also a political use: to gain an influence upon legislation, and with this to help bring about a shortening of the labor time." York presented the following resolution for adoption: "The Congress declares the

principal task of the trades unions to be the organization and promotion of the common business of production, and recommends to the trades unions a common procedure in this direction."

The lessons arising from the independent functions of the trades unions in the present economic order seem to have steered the trades unions safely clear, into a liberation from a one-sided party-political embrace. As early as the German trades union congress which met on the 15-17 of June, 1872, the following motion of York was adopted: "In consideration of the fact that all workers, whether they are Conservatives, Liberals, or Social-Democrats, are all equally and very severely oppressed and exploited by the power of capital, this congress declares it to be the sacred duty of every worker to lay aside all party disputes, and upon the neutral grounds of a united trades union organization to create the necessary conditions of a successful, strong resistance to secure the safety of their threatened existence and to achieve the improvement of their class conditions."

In our own day August Bebel has declared himself against a party-political trades union movement in his well-known address on "The Trades Union Movement and Political Parties". According to Bebel, the trades union ought to accept every worker, without regard to his religious or political opinions or his descent. "I recommend accordingly," said he, "that all party-political and religious discussions be kept away from the trades unions; but I recommend that

so much the more they have to do with labor politics, with the politics of the class struggle."

The trades unions embody in themselves a new economic organizing principle. This idea flashes out even in the York resolution. But it found its first clear and complete development in the mind of that eccentric Social-Democratic agitator, Karl Hillman. To the meritorious York, the trades unions constituted a very important step toward an economically and socially higher form of production, the co-operative producing societies. Hillmann regards the trades unions as the immediate and basic form of the production method of the future, which must be generalized by the state. "The organization of the trades unions," said he, "must not only be recognized by the state, but the form of the trades union organizations also must be extended throughout the entire life of the state and community."

In his essay on "Practical Emancipation-Hints for the Promotion of the Trades Unions" (1873) K. Hillmann unfolded an entire series of very noteworthy social-political ideas. According to him it was a very fortunate suggestion which was made at the Erfurt Trades Union Congress of June 1872, advocating the independence of the trades unions from political party affairs. According to his opinion "the political movement of the German working class makes altogether too one-sided and doctrinaire assertions. These must be completely broken with, if we are desirous of erecting a new structure of the state."

Theory must be turned into practice, and the basis and the reconstruction of society must be so arranged that the decayed pillars of the old

"order" do not bury the young germs of the new society in their fall. In order to establish and maintain equal rights and independence of the political parties, the larger organizations must seek to establish their own organs and papers, (as the cigar makers, the book binders, etc., have already done).

"Without preliminary social work," said Hillmann among other things, "there can be no enduring political organization and agitation, and on that account there can be no political coloring of young organizations; which, once they have grown to maturity will anyhow, according to their nature, work into politics as noteworthy members of society. It is a fruitless toil, a labor of Sisyphus, to attempt to leap over historical stages of development."

Hillmann closes with the sentence: "The economic dependence of the workers upon the capitalists constitutes the foundation of slavery in every form,"—the idea being: the trades unions strive for a better material situation and for the intellectual elevation of their members, and since they also in their nearer and farther aims advocate the independence of the entire working class, they give battle to the capitalists with all the means at their disposal.

According to Hillmann, the gaining of political power is closely bound up with the conquest of economic power; and on that account, in his brilliant booklet, "The Organization of the Masses" (1875) he strives for an extensive economic trades organization of the masses. The economic power of a class at a given stage of development according to him, turns into

political power. "History teaches us," said he once, "that the guilds of the hand-workers were a reliable key to the offices of the municipality and the council chamber; that they smoothed the way for the conquest of citizenship in the state; and that therefore the trades unions and the labor party of the present have a task similar to that of their antecedents in the Middle Ages—even if not a higher one."

"After the establishment of the mechanism, which also must first develop out of the educated political and social organization by the passing of time, the most important matter in the future state will certainly be the regulation of production and consumption. Is the political power to accomplish this alone, by a mere fiat—through its officials? I am firmly convinced, and the experience of France teaches us, that such a government would make the worst blunders, even though the greatest geniuses were at its disposal. Should the trades unions be brought in, however, as an elaborating and executive commission for the solution of this problem, it would then be possible in consequence of the statistical material brought together, or the contemporaneous conditions, to secure exact evidence as to production and consumption. Upon the basis of such a discussion it would be possible to establish legal standards. But again, for the carrying out of these laws, the organized crafts would be indispensable, if the free state is not to degenerate into a tyranny—although it would only be a passing one. The organized trades unions would distribute the proposed total annual production among the existing businesses and those to be

established, they would furnish to each business the necessary number of workers out of the total number of their workers; take charge of the proper thriving progress of the business, the interests of their manufacture in the world outside, etc."

Hillmann designated the political party as the bearer of the principles, the trades union movement as the mistress of the practice in the labor movement. The trades union movement is the road breaker in the historical mission of the fourth class; the political movement is the banner bearer of the principle of trades union labor.

The significance of the trades union movement for the emancipation of the proletariat, has remained until this day a hotly disputed question in the Social-Democratic party. Bernstein, Konrad Schmidt, Legien and Dr. Friedeberg, hold that the trades unions are the decisive weapon in the battle for the freeing of the proletariat; Bebel and Rosa Luxemburg on the other hand, see them diminishing—shall we say, with intentional exaggeration—into ineffective dull weapons. Between Bernstein, Schmidt and Legien on the one side and Dr. Friedeberg on the other, yawns a veritable chasm of difference in the points of view concerning the role of the trades unions in the evolutionary process of the new social order. According to Dr. Friedeberg the trades unions line up for a great revolutionary act, for the general strike: according to Bernstein, Schmidt and Legien they are going into a perpetual battle, in order to gain one position of economic power after another, to reduce the limits of the capitalistic ruling power in the work shops. C. Legien

sees at the same time, as the next goal of the German labor movement, that which the English trades union labor movement has already reached, and that is the change of the absolutist factory into a constitutional one. "The absolutism of the employer", said he once in a speech against Prince Posadowsky, "must give way to the constitutional factory; the previously absolutist employer must be satisfied to have alongside him a representation of the working class of the business, which shall have a joint control with him. This is the constitution which up to now has been gained in England. There the managing class must content themselves with having alongside of them a representation of the workers. And here in Germany, also, where absolutism rules in this field in an almost unlimited fashion, this constitutional factory will come. Of course, in the development that is to follow, it will be set aside by the democratic, or shall we say more correctly, the socialistic, control of manufacture." The capitalistic management will be democratized step by step, and will be transformed into a trades union socialistic management.

According to Konrad Schmidt, the trades union and political battle for social reform brings about a growing social control over the conditions of production, and the owners of capital are reduced more and more to the rank of managers by the limitation of their rights.

E. Bernstein regards the trades union movement as an actual transforming factor in the present economic order. In his appendix to the "History of British Trades Unionism", by Beatrice and Sidney Webb, he writes: "One does

not need to be a Manchesterian or an anarchist, nor an opponent of the invocation and utilization of the state, to regard it as scarcely desirable that the workers should become accustomed to receive all help and improvement from the state—as it were 'from above'. He who does not yield to a faith in a future miracle, nor hold the conception that in every moment of necessity effective organic structures can be stamped out of the ground, will hail in the trades union not only a preparatory school of far-reaching democratic self-government, but also an effective lever for the economic transformation striven for by the Social-Democracy. The expression that 'the working class must achieve its own emancipation', has a wider meaning than simply the conquering of the power of the state by the workers".

The definite outlines of a political "undermining theory" gleam now and then through the declarations of Bebel and Rosa Luxemburg concerning the trades union question. With the progressing of the capitalistic method of production the trades union weakens more and more, according to Rosa Luxemburg, and the political and socialistic class struggle forces itself mightily into the foreground of the social movement. In her booklet on "Social Reform or Revolution", she continues, "If we take into consideration larger stretches of social development, we cannot shut our eyes to the fact that on the whole we do not encounter periods of a strong advancement of the trades union movement, but rather periods of its decline. When the development of industry reaches its climax,

and the period of the "falling branch" begins for capital in the world market, then the trades union battle will be doubly difficult. First, the objective turns of the market for labor power get worse, in that the demand is slower while the supply rises more rapidly, as is now the case. Second, capital itself, in order to compensate itself for its loss upon the world markets, reaches out after the portion of the product due to labor. The reducing of the wage of labor is certainly one of the most effective means for holding up the falling rate of profit. England furnishes us ready to hand the picture of the beginning of the second period of the trades union movement. Driven by necessity it reduces itself ever more to the mere defense of that which has already been achieved, and even this becomes ever more difficult. This is the characteristic universal course of the matter, of which the reverse and correlative side must be the advancement of the socialistic and class battle."

The political class struggle undermines the economic, and sucks up completely its content. Bebel indicates in powerful strokes the "emptying" of the economic struggle in Germany as already beginning. "In Germany," said he at the Social-Democratic congress in Cologne in 1898, "through the social-political legislation, especially the insurance legislation, this branch of the trade union activity has been withdrawn, and thereby a live nerve has been cut, which in England and among the German book-binders had just born blossom. Other important fields, the working of which belongs among the principal tasks of the trades unions

are being withdrawn from them in the sphere of factory regulation; and that will appear in still greater extent if the Berlepsch bill, or even our own bill for the protection of labor, should become law."

"Examine the question from this point of view. With every extension of state privileges, the field of trades union activity is more and more narrowed. Legien has not even once referred to the Zurich resolution, and yet he was there. It is explicitly shown therein, with reference to America and Australia, that the trades union organizations alone have become impotent over against the concentrated power of capitalism, and consequently the political struggle must now come to the foreground. We may be organized by trades as much as we like. When capital has gained such power universally as now exists in the cases of Krupp and Stumm, in the Dortmund union, in the coal and iron industry districts of Rhineland and Westphal, then the trades union movement is played out, then the political movement alone can help. One thread of life after another for the trades unions will be cut off, from very natural and easily understood causes."

The theories of Bernstein, Schmidt and Legien, and those of Bebel and Luxemburg, clash violently. We have here only to set forth this clash, and not to attempt any reflections upon it. We conclude here only, from the continuance of this sharp theoretical opposition within the Social-Democratic party, the necessity of a quiet, positive discussion concerning the disputed trades

union problem. The methods of viewing the social-political value of the trades unions, and their tactics in the struggle for emancipation, are still conceived, even in the Social-Democracy, to be in process of formation.

## CHAPTER VI.

### CO-OPERATIVES AND THE SOCIAL-DEMOCRACY.

Socialistic theoreticians have repeatedly described the socialistic-economic order of the future as a great producing and consuming co-operative society. And with this description they have introduced an entirely correct point of view. The socialistic social order does not necessarily accept as a mark of its character a universal state power, subjecting all else to itself. Socialism grows out of the present economic and social order, and in this order the municipality and the co-operative societies stand alongside of the state as organizing factors of the economic life. And surely in the social order which transacts its business in a systematic fashion, the coercive power of the state can allow the extent of its task to be very considerably limited. In regard to compulsory co-operative organizations, our insurance against sickness may help us to conceive that one day universal economic co-operative societies may exist with compulsory membership, which will regulate their own economic affairs and will be watched over by the state only to a limited extent, in order that monopolistic tendencies may not spring up within them.

In the present English co-operative societies, Karl Marx saw already the incarnation of the co-operative form of enterprise, based upon social

labor, which could entirely dispense with the wage system. These co-operatives were to him the convincing proof that the means of labor need not necessarily take on the character of a means of rulership, in order to bear fruit. The English co-operative movement showed him that wage labor, like slave labor and serfdom, is a passing form of labor which, doomed to perish, must disappear before associated labor. The resolution introduced by the general board (of the International) and adopted by the Geneva congress, recognized the co-operative movement as one of the motive powers for the transformation of the present society, which is based upon class antagonism. "Its greatest merit consists in this, that it shows in a practical manner that the existing impoverishing and despotic system—of subjecting labor to capital—can be displaced through the republican system, promoting the common welfare by association of free and equal producers. On the other hand, the ability is denied it "to transform the capitalistic social order by itself alone." The power of the state must pass out of the hands of capitalists and land owners into the hands of the workers, "in order to change the social production into a great harmonious system of free and co-operative labor."

That tested champion of the revolution, John Ph. Becker, declared two years later, in a circular letter to the German labor unions, which at the Fifth Conference of the co-operative societies at Nuernberg was recommended by the Leipzig and Dresden members for adoption as a program:

"Indeed! This co-operative society plan will guard the working class first of all against the labyrinths of the one-sided individualizing tendency to disintegrate the entire common life; will accustom it to a collective initiative and a common effort, even if at first it is only by groups; will offer opportunity and schools for the selecting and developing of the proper talents for leadership, management and legislation; in actual practice will—more thoroughly than was ever possible in theory—strip from all means of palliation every appearance of efficiency and exclusive-saving-power; and finally, through their acquired insight, through a well-considered desire for self-preservation, and the constant pressure of the facts impelling toward a gradual unification of all the groups, it will at the same time bring about the inauguration of a safe, responsible solidarity of the whole, and so also the accomplishment of a unified free state, as a natural growth."

But this passionate burst of feeling on the part of J. Ph. Becker for the benefit of the co-operative society did not awaken throughout among the German working class any universal or joyful enthusiasm for this cause. They stood generally under the spell of the Lassallean theories, which regarded with a rather frosty mien, if not with an attitude of immediate rejection, the co-operative movement based upon self-help.

The words of the Lassallean "Open Answers" had sunk deep into the minds of the German workers. In the Lassallean structure of ideas the theory of the "iron law of wages" constituted

a portion of the foundation. According to this law, the worker received in the form of wages only the average support required for the necessary means of life for himself and family. Lassalle writes: "The disadvantage which affects the working class, affects it as producers, as the law quoted (sub. 2.) will show. Therefore it is an entirely false step to try to help the worker as a consumer instead of helping him on the one side where the shoe really pinches—as a producer. As consumer all stand to-day universally equal." Lassalle means, that just as all men are equal before the policeman, so they are before the one who sells—provided only that they pay. In the sphere of consumption, the kingdom of liberty and equality already smiles upon the worker. In the co-operative stores Lassalle could see no thorough-going means for raising the social condition of the working class. These co-operative stores can never over-run the fixed limits within which the wage conditions of the working class move under the compulsion of the iron law of wages. The co-operative stores must cheapen the expense of the laborer and thereby bring down the wage just the same, so soon as they essentially affect the conditions of the proletariat: for the cruel law of wages in its inexorable fatalistic effect, feeds the workers always only with the most necessary means of life used upon a given level of culture.

The Social-Democrats of the Eisenacher wing ✓ also gave a very clear defiance to the co-operative movement which depended upon self-help. In the year 1869 there appeared in the "Volksstaat" a series of articles by Karl Hirsch under the

title "The State and the Co-operative Movement". In these articles the following leading ideas were developed: "It is surely incontrovertible, that only in freedom and in the political reforms can the solution of the social problem be conceived; but it is also equally true that in the reforms alone—as forms—the solution is not yet given. It lies as much, conceivably as well as historically, in the construction of the collective property by the method of the co-operative society. The co-operative society has grown out of the bourgeois production which has accustomed labor to place its labor-power under a central command—to be sure for the benefit of a third party—and to work hand in hand. The bourgeoisie has imparted to the workers not only the benefit of unification but also the discipline necessary for the co-operative society, and has driven labor to co-operative unification. The workers, standing under the iron law of wages, cannot create for themselves the great pre-requisites for productive associations, such as land, machinery and raw material. These foundations for productive co-operative societies which are to be capable of development must be taken out of the treasury of the state. But—the treasury of the present state, do you think? You may be sure, only the treasury of the Social-Democratic republican state. The state-help which can be of actual use to the workers can be expected only in a republic which has the welfare of the great masses of the people as its aim—in the Social-Democratic republic."

In the articles of Engels in the "Volksstaat" concerning the "Housing Question", one blow of

the many which he aimed against certain social-reform propositions, was directed against the co-operative consume societies. Upon the basis of the iron law of political economy, according to Engels, a reduction of the value of labor-power follows at once upon every reduction of prices for the laborer, and is therefore followed by a decided fall in the wages of labor. This proposition holds good for all reforms which flow out of a saving or cheapening of the means of living for the laborer. Or else it is universal and then is followed by a decided reduction in wages. "We will suppose, that in a certain neighborhood it happens, that by the universal introduction of co-operative consume societies the means of living is made 20% less. Then the wages of labor must fall there 20% permanently, i. e., in the same proportion in which the means of living enter into the expenses of the laborer."

The ideas of Lassalle and Engels concerning the social meaninglessness of the co-operative societies based upon self-help, had not yet lost their power over the great masses of the Social-Democratic working men in 1892. It was with the loud applause of the party convention that J. Auer said, among other things: "Whoever knows the Lassallean agitation booklets, must also know the attitude of the Social-Democracy toward the co-operative societies. In this matter our attitude has not altered with respect to principles since that time."

The Berlin convention of 1892 adopted the following resolution of Auer's concerning the co-operative societies: "The party can only approve the founding of co-operative societies,

when they help comrades whose social means of existence is determined by the political or trades union battle, or where they serve to make the agitation less burdensome. Party comrades must oppose the belief, that co-operative societies are in a position to influence the capitalistic conditions of production to improve the condition of the working class, to do away with the political and trades union class struggle, or even to modify the latter."

Undisturbed, however, by the theories of Lassalle, in the 80's of the past century there set in among the centres of the Social-Democratic labor movement clear-sighted and effective efforts towards co-operative consume societies. In Leipsic-Plagwitz a Labor Consume society was established in the year 1884; in Dresden one in 1887. The Dresden Consume Society Vorwaerts numbered in 1899, 19,000 members; the Leipsic-Plagwitz Consume Society (1900-1901) numbered 25,000 members. In the beginning of the 90's of the nineteenth century the socialistic theory again turned its attention to the question of co-operative societies. Dr. Aarons gave instructive addresses concerning co-operative societies. Bernstein treated the co-operative question in the "Neue Zeit". Karl Kautsky published his essay on "Consume Societies and the Labor Movement" in the "Wiener Arbeiter Bibliothek". This essay sought to define the limits of the operation of the consume societies. "The economic side of the consume societies is much more advantageous than the educational," writes Kautsky. "There is no doubt that they are in a position to furnish the consumers with better or cheaper means of

life, and to guard them against fraud or adulteration. Lassalle meant however, that what the worker gained by the consume society upon the one side, he lost upon the other; since in the degree that the means of living became generally cheaper, according to the iron law of wages the wage of labor must fall. But this law of wages, in the form and upon the foundation held by Lassalle has long been known to be mistaken. There is no doubt that the cost of living has its effect upon wages, but it is not the only factor which has influence upon the latter. The wages do not necessarily follow the fluctuation of the price of living. Wages are less easily moved than the cost of the means of life. They easily remain stable, even when the latter rise; so that whatever raises the cost of living makes the conditions of the laborer worse before it makes the wages rise. The tariff and bi-metalism are to be regarded from this point of view. On the other hand, wages must also remain stable, when the cost of living falls, and this will most likely be the case where the working class is strongly organized politically and in trades unions." Kautsky accordingly opposes the point of view, that under given conditions it is a matter of indifference whether the worker received for his wages a larger or smaller amount of articles of use. "The cheaper the means of life", he continues, "the cheaper he can feed and clothe himself, and therefore be the more capable of resistance. And not only that. Of those expenditures which the worker makes, those which cover his bodily necessities are decidedly the least elastic. These are determined by natural law and deeply rooted

habits of life. Accordingly in the fluctuation of wages his culture necessities are first affected—the expenditures for education, politics, etc. These are the things which first of all gain, when the means of life of the worker—food, heat, light, clothing, etc.,—become cheaper, at least where the proletariat has reached a certain level. And exactly these expenditures for culture demand urgently a larger expenditure....”

Karl Kautsky then closes his essay on “The Co-operative Consumers’ Societies and the Labor Movement” with the significant proposition: “However little suited even to-day the endeavors in some localities may be for the creation of a great co-operative, however much consumers’ societies may be the means of making the workers narrow minded and of frittering away their strength in unfruitful compromising experiments; sooner or later in every country alongside the trades union battle for influencing the conditions of production, alongside the struggle of the proletariat for power in the municipality and state, alongside the efforts of the municipality and state for the extension and multiplication of the branches of production to be controlled and administered by them, the co-operative movement is called to play no inconsiderable part in the emancipation struggle of the proletariat.”

“And what else is the picture which we sketch for ourselves of the socialist society (of the future) than that of a gigantic consumers’ co-operative society, which is of course not a trade society, but rather at the same time a producing co-operative, whose enterprises produce for the consumption of its own members.”

The labor co-operative societies grew strongly in Germany. Through them the position of economic power of the workers here and there was established and extended. No wonder that the idea made way in the minds of the workers that the co-operative societies must be pressed into service for the conquest of economic power for the working class.

In this sense, Von Elm especially expressed himself in his brochure on the Co-operative Movement: "It is not sufficient to snatch away only the political power from our opponents, but it is equally necessary to gradually conquer the economic power. Without this, it is inconceivable that we can attain our goal. I do not at all believe that the thing will develop in such a fashion that one fine day, in the possession of the political power, the entire socialist society can be organized from one central point. That is an entirely mistaken idea, and is also an inherent contradiction to our democratic ways of looking at things. In this matter I adopt the point of view of Lassalle, who declared: 'The revolution will only be successful, when it has already come to maturity in the womb of (present) society.' I am accordingly of the opinion that the working class must first acquire a greater measure of economic power and must create a mechanism with which the further construction of the Social-Democratic organization can connect itself...."

"At the Hanover party convention it was recognized, that through the co-operative societies an entirely essential improvement in the condition of the working class can be brought about. It is still more important, that the party

recognizes in them a means adapted to the education of the working class. 'But,' it was further said, 'it does not allow to them any decisive meaning in the battle of the working class for freedom.' I am also of the opinion, that the co-operative societies are not a panacea, but that as has already been said, they must come along as supplementary to the trades union and political movements."

The German Social-Democracy has also a rich inner development in the field of the theory and practice of the co-operative movement. It has quietly gone on its way in spite of the points of view of its authorities, such as Engels and Marx.

## CONCLUSION.

### THE "SECRET" OF THE CHANGES OF THE SOCIAL-DEMOCRACY.

Have we Social-Democrats stayed by the "fathers"? Who cares to answer this question to-day with an audacious affirmative, with the theoretic and tactical changes of the Social-Democracy at hand? We have moulted—and we shall moult again. So long as we are real "companions of the storm", and live in and with the great transformations of our time, there can be no permanence for us, no sticking tight to one spot.

Here at the close of our work let a man speak, who was always numbered among the unswerving, and who with wonderful sureness of stroke, on the basis of his half-century of experience, revealed the secret of the theoretical and tactical changes of the Social-Democracy.

"In the early days of our party," said Liebknecht at the Social-Democratic congress in Hamburg in 1897, "when we had only a few followers, we went to the Reichstag in order to use the tribune exclusively, or almost exclusively, for the propagation of our ideas. But very soon we were placed upon the ground of practical matters. We have seen that the injustice in the present social order is something more serious than simply an opportunity for the making of

pretty speeches, and that it will not be done away with by the prettiest or strongest of speeches."

“We have discovered that the most important thing is, to do something in the field of practical affairs. We have been called out of the ranks of the working class, so that in connection with all labor legislation and all other affairs which might offer the opportunity, by amendments and by original propositions, we should advocate the improvement of the momentary conditions and laws. Is such a proposition, to covenant with the existing conditions,—is that treason? What is then the entire activity of the Social-Democratic fraction? Whoever desires that we behave ourselves differently, that we should forsake the field of practical matters and work purely with theories, he is asking that we should crawl back again into the egg-shells out of which we crept long, long ago.”

*The End.*

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